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THE LIFE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

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THE DUCHESS OF KENT AND THE INFANT PRINCESS VICTORIA IN KENSINGTON GARDENS

THE FIRST PUBLIC APPEARANCE OF THE QUEEN

DRAWN BY W. HATHERELL, R.I.

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Victoria, Queen and Empress

"Her Court was pure; her life serene;
God gave her peace; her land reposed;

"A thousand claims to reverence closed
In her as Mother, Wife, and Queen.
—TENNYSON.

THE LITTLE PRINCESS

In the year 1819 the Royal Family of England was not in a happy or prosperous state. Seldom before or since has there been less comfort in the prospects of the House of Hanover. King George III. was in seclusion, bowed down with incurable disease; and of all his large family, fifteen sons and daughters, most of whom were still living at that period, not one had a successor to come after them, a legitimate heir to the Crown. It is needless to enter into any description of the state of things which had caused this. The sons of the reigning House, when they loved at all, had not loved as they ought. Wilful young men, brought up in a house which, though virtuous, was dull, by arbitrary parents making little allowance for youthful fancy, they had either plunged into dissipation or had fixed their choice upon unroyal ladies who could not be received as their lawful wives, possible mothers of a future Sovereign; and for twenty years the sole hope of the Royal House had been the Princess Charlotte, the only child of a most unhappy marriage, but in herself a sweet and promising young woman, with many claims upon the tenderness and sympathy of the nation. So long as she lived all national requirements were satisfied on the point of heirship. She married wisely and happily, not only making an admirable choice for herself, but bringing forward unawares out of the obscurity of Princely life in Germany, and from amid a crowd of pretty Princes equally distinguished and undistinguished, a family which has held a greater place since in the affairs of Christendom than perhaps any other, the family of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. Prince Leopold, the husband thus chosen, was the first to show the family faculty of combining the quietest and most unostentatious private life with great devotion to public affairs, and that polished penetration and sagacity which make a statesman, as much as an eye for form and colour make an artist; and everything bade fair for the happiest Royal life that England perhaps had ever known. The historical student, looking on after these events, might well pronounce this brief chapter to hold the place of a sketch for a great picture—as if the mighty Artificer of the world had tried the combination first in a momentary episode before touching the larger, more permanent canvas. As Victoria and Albert were a generation later, so were Charlotte and Leopold in 1817—a good, true, honest, and noble-minded pair, setting up a pure household, a high standard of life, in the midst of the careless England of those days, in which dissipation was more wild, and vice more undisguised, than now. The spectacle of conscientious Royalty working hard at its noble occupation, without ambitious thought or desire either for aggrandisement or added splendour in its own person, was something quite new in the world, too like experiments, perhaps, to be worked out all at once. But in little more than a year the essay ended, the young household was broken up, and all these beautiful hopes were at an end. Princess Charlotte died, and the Royal House found itself childless. There were still many brothers, it is true, but they were beyond their prime, and all unmarried except the two eldest, who had no surviving children. The situation was a startling one, all the more for being so unexpected; for the happy marriage of the Princess Charlotte seemed to have settled matters in the most satisfactory way. Within a few months of her death, however, several marriages took place in the Royal Family, the most important of which was that of the Duke of Kent, the fourth son of George III., who married a sister of Prince Leopold, the Princess of Leiningen, a young widow with two children, in the month of May, 1818. Of this marriage was born Victoria, the happiest, most stainless, and most popular of English sovereigns, against whom no sedition ever arose, no evil whisper ever been breathed, whom her severest critics would have stood for to the death as stoutly as her dearest friends; and who could at any time of her long reign, from her accession, even when crowns were falling around her, and all the demons of revolution raging, have passed unattacked from end to end of her country, secure in receiving but universal homage, and honour, and loyalty, and devotion. It is doubtful whether as much could be said of any other Monarch who has ever reigned.

The Princess Victoria was born within the homely brick walls of Kensington Palace on May 24, 1819. She alone of the little group of Royal children born in that year was English by actual birth. The present Duke of Cambridge and the late ex-King of Hanover were both born in Germany, and so was a hapless baby who would have stood first among them had she lived, a little daughter of the Duke of Clarence, who was next in succession to the throne. It would seem that Providence had decided that England was certainly to have a Queen, for the children of King William IV., too, were all girls. These children, however, all died, and though it was by no means sure at the time of Princess Victoria's birth that she would be the future Queen, yet she came first in her generation, though with many possibilities against her. For it was not unlikely that George IV. might marry again on the death of his unacknowledged Queen, whom he hated; and, as a matter of fact, several children were born to the Duke of Clarence—afterwards William IV.—after the birth of the Princess Victoria. There was, however, sufficient probability of her succession to fill the minds of all belonging to her with a thrill of excitement beyond that which greets every new-born child when the little Princess came into the world. In the letter of her mother's mother, the old Duchess of Saxe-Coburg—written on hearing of the event—this sentiment is very apparent:—"Again a Charlotte," she writes, "destined, perhaps, to play a great part one day, if a brother is not born to take it out of her hands. The English like Queens." No happier augury could be said over the cradle of a Sovereign, and nothing more true. The English have cause to love Queens, for England has never been greater, more famous, or more full of genius than when her Monarchs were women. And though George III., with his domestic virtues, had been a popular King, he was the only one of his race who had any pretensions to this name. The House of Hanover had not been beloved. It wanted a woman to conciliate and charm the heart of the nation, and to call forth that chivalry which is so good an auxiliary of loyalty. Princess Charlotte had already done something. She had made herself dear and sacred, if by nothing else, by her death. The country had mourned for her as for the child of its hopes. And now, again, here was hope in its purest shape—re-born.

The Princess Victoria's training, however, was very different from the irregular, unhappy education of her unfortunate cousin and predecessor. Except those splendid prospects, there was nothing happy in the external circumstances among which her life began. When she was only a few months old her father died, closely followed by his father—poor old King George, whose life for some time past had been of little value to himself or any one. Before this, it is recorded that "the Regent was not kind to his brother," and when the Duke of Kent died it was found that "the Duke had left his family deprived of all means of existence." Thus the position of the mother of the future Sovereign—a young German Princess, so soon left alone in this strange and not always very genial country—was far from consoling. Her brother, Prince Leopold, hastened to her in her distress, and stood by her in all her future difficulties. Few women have had a severer piece of work to undertake. But for that wise and kind brother, the Duchess of Kent, though the mother of the future Queen, was all but unfriended in a home with which she had as yet but little time to get acquainted. She was a foreigner, accustomed to different ways of living, and had not even the easy elasticity of youth which accommodates itself to anything, for she was already over thirty when she married the Duke. And while occupying so great a position she was comparatively poor. Had she withdrawn with her child to her own country, to bring the little Princess up among her own people, cheaply and kindly—far away from the criticisms and extravagances, the late hours and bustle of English life—who could have wondered? But the Duchess had the temperate Coburg blood in her veins, and shared the sound sense and judgment of her race. She never forgot that her eight-months'-old baby was the first Princess of the Blood, English above all things, and imperatively requiring an English education. And she began her long career of self-denial by steadily remaining in England, though far from her friends and everything that was most dear to her. The little family, increased, returned to the old Palace at Kensington, where the child had been born, and there the early days of the Princess were chiefly spent. More happy than most children in her position, the little heiress of England had the society of an elder sister, whose superior age must, in those innocent days, have neutralised the immense difference of position, and given something of the sweet natural humility of a younger child in a well-regulated household to this most important member of the family, all unconscious of her own greatness. This sister, Princess Feodora, afterwards Princess Hohenlohe, was the tenderest of friends and companions to the Queen during her whole life. They were brought up together in quiet old Kensington, and in the sweeter solitude of Claremont, the house where Prince Leopold had spent his short married life, which belonged to him, and in which he often received his widowed sister and her little girl. They were there in the summer of 1824, and so bright must that summer have been that its brightness lasted long in recollection, though the little Princess was but four years old. "Those days of Claremont," the Queen herself wrote, "were the happiest days of her childhood."

In this quiet routine, retired from all the observation and bustle of London, in that domestic peace which affords a certain compensation to such imperfect households for the loss, with the husband and father, of all the other parts of life, the most careful education was given to the Royal child. In no other kind of home are the children so entirely the centre of life as in that of a teacher mother who is a widow. It does not require the superior importance of a future Royalty to secure this concentration of all interests in one; but here there was every inducement, public and private, to make the mental and moral training of the little Princess the first object of all surrounding her. Over this training Prince Leopold watched, with all the interest of a statesman, and all the tenderness of a father. He introduced less disturbance than a father would have done, for all his own larger life was apart from the gentle household; but he was wiser than most fathers, and took the largest view of the trust thus confided to his hands; and all that the kindest and most watchful care could do he did for his sister and her precious charge. Already, too, other visions of the future were dawning before the far-seeing eyes of the man who, with the sincerest desire for the welfare of England, and a longing, no doubt made all the stronger by the melancholy failure of his personal hopes to give to the country which had received him so kindly a noble Sovereign—had, at the same time, a natural wish to advance his own family, worthy by constitution and character as it had already proved itself. Another child standing to him in exactly the same relationship as the little Victoria had been born just after her, in the Ducal Court at Saxe-Coburg, in the cheerful country house of the Rosenau, a child occupying exactly the same position to which he had been himself born, as the little Princess did that of his young wife so early lost. What wonder if the heart of the statesman Prince, still sore from that wound, pleased itself with the thought of another union which should carry out all his abortive hopes? While the children were still in their cradles this idea seems to have communicated itself to all about them. The family were in constant communication, the young mothers exchanging their pleasant experiences and bits of nursery news, as mothers will do as long as the species lasts. All the doings and growings of "the little Mayflower," as the Princess was called by the kind German kinsfolk, were recorded with fond simplicity for the satisfaction of the old grandmother at home. The good German nurse, who passed from one house to another as her services were wanted, "could not sufficiently describe what a dear little love" the baby at Kensington was, and the baby of the Rosenau had the enthusiastic pen of his mother to do him full justice. Albert was of extraordinary beauty, this impartial historian declared. "He had great blue eyes, dimples on each cheek, three teeth, and at eight months old was already beginning to walk." Great news! enough to make the other nursery thrill with emulation as these notes were compared. What a compensation lies in this sweet babble of children, for women's ears at least! for both the poor ladies who wrote had troubles enough; the one in England had to hold her own with modest courage in face of the criticism and doubtful friendliness of a whole foreign society, in face of poverty and loneliness; the other was on the brink of a separation from home and children altogether. A dark background full of human trouble and sorrow comes behind the two angelical heads, that look out wondering, with blue eyes wide open, at the spectator. But could anything be more charming and touching than these baby notes?

Naturally there are but few records of this early period left. The Queen's own amused recollection when she first takes travelling with her another little Princess Victoria, her eldest child, and sees herself once more bowing to the spectators in baby state from the window of the carriage, is almost all the little twinkle of reminiscence which we have. "I put me so in mind of myself when I was the little Princess," she said, with the frank simplicity which made Her Majesty's friendly confidences to her people so popular. Still, however, though an ever-growing interest accompanied the little Princess wherever she went, her position was not assured. There still existed in the background behind the little figure, yet threatening to eclipse her, the shadow of another family in which things did not go so well with the children. When the Duchess of Clarence, afterwards Queen Adelaide, lost her second daughter, she wrote to her sister-in-law in words of the most touching resignation. "My children are dead," said the poor lady, "but yours live, and she is mine, too!" So many griefs, so many dyings went to make the throned estate and great fortune of the little Victoria. Her infantine face, all innocent and fearless, the same face which had come down from generation to generation through all the line of Brunswick, was the first young countenance for many years upon which there was no shade.

A few years later, when she was nine years old, Sir Walter Scott records in his diary that he had dined with the Duchess of Kent, and had been presented by Prince Leopold "to the little Princess Victoria—the Heir-Apparent to the House as things now stand. This little lady," he added, "is educated with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are the Heir of England.' I suspect, if we could dissect the little heart, we should find that some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter. She is fair, like the Royal Family." Sir Walter's idea, however, had as little foundation in fact as such surmises often have. The little Princess neither at that time nor for years after knew anything of her pre-eminence. She was brought up with the strictest economy and regularity, as children of much lower position rarely are, and was taught at an early age to restrain her expenditure within the limits of her income, even when that income was but a child's pocket-money. Miss Martineau, an authority not likely to err in the way of enthusiasm, gives us, in the sketch of the Duchess of Kent, an anecdote current at the time, which illustrates the carefulness of the training better than it does the abstract statement which precedes it, that the Princess "was reared in as simple and homely a style and care about money matters as any citizen's child. Very few citizen's children, we believe, ever were or could be so rigidly guarded from an extra shilling of expenditure. "It became known at Tunbridge Wells that the Princess had been unable to buy a box at the Bazaar because she had spent her money. At this Bazaar she had bought presents for almost all her relations, and had laid out her last shilling, when she remembered one cousin more, and saw a box priced half-a-crown which would suit him. The shop people, of course, placed the box with the other purchases, but the little lady's governess admonished them by saying, 'No; you see the Princess has not got the money, therefore, of course, she cannot buy the box.' This being perceived, the next offer was to lay by the box till it could be purchased; and the answer was, 'Oh, well, if you will be so good as to do that.' On quarter day, before seven in the morning, the Princess appeared on her donkey to obtain her purchase." This reads like a story out of Sandford and Merton. But the Princess Victoria came by her father's side of a lavish and largely spending race, and no doubt on this account the discipline under which she was trained became more severe.

A much prettier story, and one of the authenticity of which there can be no doubt, gives a description of the way in which her future rank was revealed to her. No one had been allowed, as is mentioned above, to breathe a word of this in the child's ear. But events now began to happen which changed her position to a certain extent. King George IV. died, which brought the Princess a step nearer to the Throne, and it was no longer likely that King William could have children to succeed him. Thus the child of Kensington Palace became beyond all doubt the next in succession, with only an old man of sixty-five, in indifferent

PRINCESS CHARLOTTE, DAUGHTER OF GEORGE IV.

KING WILLIAM IV.

The Duke of Kent married H.S.H. Princess of Leiningen, a young widow with two children, of whom one afterwards married the Prince of Hohenlohe Langenburg. To them was born a daughter, Princess Amelia, who afterwards became Princess of Schleswig-Holstein

THE PRINCESS OF HOHENLOHE AND HER DAUGHTER
From the Painting by Sir George Hayter

health, between her and the Throne. And she herself was only twelve, and her nearest English relative was not of a character to reassure her friends. In these circumstances, a Bill was brought into Parliament to make the Duchess of Kent Regent in case her daughter should be called upon to ascend the Throne before she came of age. When these public precautions were taken, it was thought necessary to inform the little girl herself of her true position—that she was not merely one of a band of Princes and Princesses, the younger members of the family, but the first among them—the future Head of the Realm. She was in the midst of her daily lessons, somewhat surprised, it would seem, at the grave work required from her, which was not expected from the other Princesses, when this great intimation was made to her. The story is told in a letter from her governess, the Baroness Lehzen, to the Queen, written in 1854, and apparently recalling to her the incidents of her youth :—

"I ask your Majesty's leave to cite some remarkable words of your Majesty when only twelve years old, while the Regency Bill was in progress. I then said to the Duchess of Kent that now for the first time your Majesty ought to know your place in the Succession. Her Royal Highness agreed with me, and I [illegible] the genealogical table into the historical book. When Mr. Davys (the Queen's Instructor, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough) was gone, the Princess Victoria opened the book again as usual, and seeing the additional paper said, 'I never saw that before.' 'It was not thought necessary you should, Princess,' I answered. 'I see I am nearer the throne than I thought.' 'So it is, Madam,' I said. After some moments the Princess resumed—'Now many a child would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is much responsibility.' The Princess, having lifted up the forefinger of her right hand while she spoke, gave me that little hand, saying, 'I will be good. I understand now why you urged me so much to learn even Latin. My cousins Augusta and Mary never did; but you told me Latin is the foundation of English grammar and of all the elegant expressions, and I learned it as you wished it; but I understand all better now.' And the little Princess gave me her hand, repeating, 'I will be good.'"

It is seldom that a little scene like this stands out so distinctly in the early story even of a life destined to greatness. The hush of awe upon the child, the childish application of this great secret to the whatnot study of Latin which was not required from the others, the immediate resolution—so simple, yet containing all the wisest sage could have counselled or the greatest hero vowed—"I will be good," make a perfect little picture. It is the clearest appearance of the future Queen in her own person that we get through the soft obscurity of those childish years. The same hand which placed itself so solemnly in the anxious guardian's hand to give weight to the simple vow, inscribed long after, in full maturity, a few words of recollection upon the margin of this narrative. "I cried much on hearing it," writes the Queen. No further words are needed to enhance the effect of the touching scene.

After this wonderful revelation the schoolroom routine began again, the lessons were learned, the happy monotony of the child's existence was resumed. All was as modest, as retired, as quiet as ever. The little Heiress of England was not permitted to take part in the pageant of her uncle's accession, or brought forward too soon into the glare of day. After this date the course of her education widened, and she was made acquainted with various features of her own country, making a series of visits and expeditions throughout England, to many of the most interesting towns, cathedrals, and other remarkable places.

And wherever the little maiden went, as was natural, she was the centre of attraction. A creature so young and so highly placed, with already the shadow of a crown upon her, drew all eyes, and gave a charm of sympathetic nature which ennobled it to the ordinary curiosity of the crowd. Something kinder than curiosity, a feeling more warm and genial than the vulgar love of a spectacle, drew gazers out upon her path wherever she moved. And thus her wise mother accustomed her unconsciously to the multitude of eyes that were to watch her every movement, and to the often monotonous if sometimes exciting, details of a public life. There does not seem any appearance that in her early days the Queen showed any of that distaste for public observation which is the greatest reproach that has ever been made against her in later life. Difficulties of all kinds, however, as was natural, beset her young path. Her position was infinitely more delicate and critical than had she been the daughter of the reigning Sovereign, holding a natural place in his family. The revelations of the late Mr. Greville, questionable as they are both in good taste and social fidelity, show painfully enough some of the early troubles to which the Princess was especially her mother were exposed. The King took this offence at the wise restraint under which the young Princess was brought up, and so far forgot what was due to a lady and his guest, as to upbraid the Duchess of Kent, at her own table, for keeping her young daughter as much as he could out of the unwholesome air of the Court. When we read of this scene, of the Queen's confusion, and the Princess's tears, and the painful family squabble revealed to all the gossiping, whispering world, we can realise better what difficulties must have been in the way of such a serious education, and such a seclusion from courtiers, flatterers, and royal bad manners as made the Princess Victoria when she came to the throne

KENSINGTON PALACE, WHERE THE QUEEN WAS BORN, MAY 24, 1819

the admiration of all who surrounded her. Evidently, the conscientious mother and guardian, the charge of conducting her young mind safe and spotless through all these dizzy heights to the great elevation which awaited her, was motive enough to enable her to bear all things, and follow steadily the course chalked out, whatever angry King or impertinent critic could say.

On the other hand, while the Duchess was blamed for keeping the young Princess out of the burn of the Court, she was equally blamed for the little expeditions, so profitable to old parties, by which the young lady was made acquainted with her country, and became to some degree known, so far as the modesty of her girlhood permitted, to her future people. Almost every heir or heiress who is not the son or daughter of the previous possessor of the inheritance is liable to the same jealous watch and inevitable fault-finding. Her mother kept her child from all vulgar contact with the crowd; it was an rigorous seclusion." She took her to see a beautiful cathedral or historical house. It was an attempt at a Royal progress. Thus it was the critics contradicted each other. And in the meantime Kensington Palace held its own with a firmness of less remarkable than the purity and gravity of the men which were there pursued. The system of travel and intercourse with the world which has been so largely adopted in the training of our present Princes had not then struck the public mind as desirable, and the Princess Victoria never left England, notwithstanding the crowd of kind relations which she possessed in Germany, and the interest which that country must have had for her as her mother's birthplace, and as the home of the cousins of whom she had heard so much, and of one of whom she was soon to have so close an interest.

Since the publication of the Prince Consort's life, the story of the young Princess in her early years becomes doubly rich and interesting. A double existence has been set before us in this book. The interests of the Crown of England were scarcely more considered in Kensington than they were in Coburg, where, from his earliest youth, the boy Albert was trained to help and strengthen the girl Victoria in the great work that lay before her. The Prince was more free to go and come, to mix with different classes, to learn and acquire experience among men than his future bride could be. He was more free even than though he himself had occupied the great position of Heir of England. He could move about the world unencumbered by pomp, unattended by observation; and over him as over his cousin the wise supervision of his uncle was extended. So long as they were both children, nothing further could come of it, but it is very interesting now to note how entirely from their cradles the two were trained to form one.

In the meantime the Princess advanced towards womanhood, in an atmosphere as nearly resembling the wholesome quiet and seclusion in which childhood is ordinarily allowed to develop as was possible—aged amid those natural relationships which make life sweet in all ranks and at all ages. Her rank forbade the entirely unrestrained quiet which is most favourable for the growth of the human faculties, but at least this sweet obscurity was preserved as far as might be, and the inevitable exposure to the public gaze was tempered by tender companionship, and by the consciousness of duty, the best means of neutralising all necessary evil.

H.R.H. THE DUCHESS OF KENT, MOTHER OF THE QUEEN
FROM THE PICTURE BY C. DAWE

THE YOUNG QUEEN

It is considered generally that such topics as love and marriage are not subjects to be discussed with young people, and consequently most of us acquire all knowledge on such matters from poetry and romance, which place them in front of all human affairs. But the usual reserve with which parents treat this subject in England is impossible on that exceptional level of life occupied by a Queen, with whom all rules of courtship are reversed, and to whom it is essential to make her own choice, and signify her own pleasure in so important a matter, a circumstance which makes the slippery path of youth exceptionally difficult for a young Princess so splendidly, yet painfully, put aside by her great fortunes from the shelter of the common custom and gracious use and wont of life. When the Princess Victoria was seventeen, developing into womanhood, and the moment evidently approached at which she must assume the Crown, it became time to bring together the two who had been so carefully trained for each other. Whether any suspicion had yet reached the Princess's mind of this family hope we are not informed, but the young Prince could not be entirely ignorant that his fate hung in the balance when, in the month of May, 1836, a handsome and nobly gifted boy of seventeen, he came with his father and brother—with no fear of the event, but much of the sea and the terrible crossing which lay between them and England—to pay a visit to the aunt and cousin whom he had never seen. With what excitement and suspense the elder people must have watched this first encounter! The young people were of the same age, agreeable and attractive in looks, two blue-eyed human creatures, looking their great life frankly in the face, as hopeful, as unclouded, as became their years. What the Princess was will be seen from the youthful portrait with which by this time even those who remember it of old must have grown unfamiliar, losing the fair, young, candid countenances in the maturer face so familiar to us. What Prince Albert was is described by Baron Stockmar in a letter written on the eve of this eventful meeting to the anxious uncle, King Leopold, whose long cherished plans were now to be put to the test:—

"Albert is a fine young fellow, well-grown for his age, with agreeable and valuable qualities, and who, if things go well, may in a few years turn out a strong, handsome man, of a kindly, simple, yet dignified demeanour. Externally, therefore, he possesses all that pleases the sex, and at all times, and in all countries, must please."

This was the external aspect of the youth; his mind, a more inscrutable subject, was largely discussed between the wise and interested counsellors, who hoped to see in him the model Prince, the typical man, at once hero and sage, who should carry out all their hopes. But even to these penetrating statesmen the mind of seventeen was inscrutable, and could be regarded only with hope, not certainty. What will almost be more interesting to the general reader is that the boy thus coming to our shores, with so many plans in his head, was merry and light-hearted, as became his age, full of youthful laughter as well as youthful wisdom, and as capable of keeping his fellow-students in a roar of genial fun as of winning the approbation of the elders who were bent on fathoming the deepest secret of his being. There is so much gravity in the story that the mirth is doubly welcome when we hear of it, and, no doubt, was quite as much in the young man's favour as his well-developed figure and fine features. The Duke of Saxe Coburg and his sons arrived at Kensington Palace in the end of May, and there is no record of the meeting except in the brief letters of the Prince, published in his Memoirs, which give few details. His aunt and cousin were "very kind" and "most amiable." This is all the modest boy discloses, and probably there was not much more to tell. The world had its suspicions that something more was meant than met the eye, as to the young cousins were brought together; but no gleam of consciousness shows itself in the kind, simple letters. They had known each other all their lives, though they had never met before, and ordinary life has plenty of examples of the pleasant familiarity, yet strangeness, of such intercourse. The father and sons stayed some weeks in London, and were at Ascot, and Court dinners, and concerts, long prolonged, during which the young visitor had many "hard battles to fight against sleepiness," as young as he and so smitten in fashionable dissipations. On one evening, at least, there was "a brilliant ball at Kensington Palace," at which the young Germans, unused to such late hours, remained till four o'clock in the morning. The curious reader would like to know how often the cousins dined together, and if each felt the charm and attraction of the other, amid all the music and the waltz. There were stories going, of which we remember to have heard some echo, of flowers bestowed, and looks exchanged, in the gossip of the ballroom, but these are not things likely to be specified in letters to the mother at home.

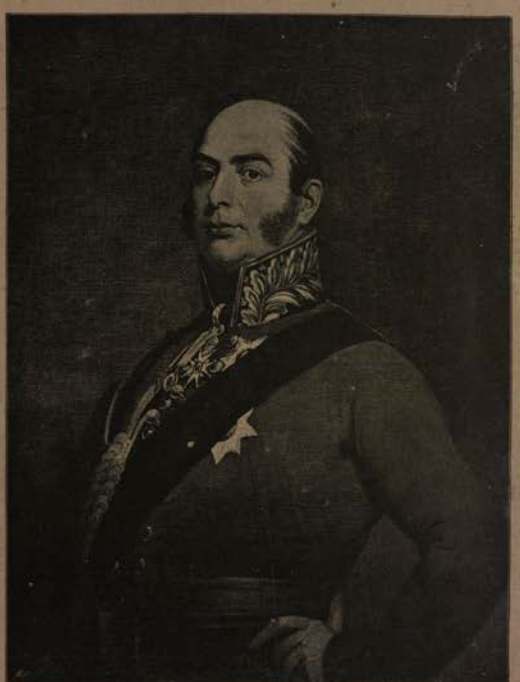
When the Prince left England, however, anxious King Leopold, who was still, as always, watching over everything, broke the silence and wrote to his niece. The Princess replied warmly, with a frankness which must have made the heart of her careful and anxious guardian rejoice—entreating her uncle to take into his special protection "one now so dear to me." What a relief this must have been to the mind of the wise King all who are aware of the perverseness of youthful inclinations, and their readiness to direct themselves in unauthorised directions and refuse the best way, will readily believe.

This, however, was not revealed to the world, nor even, it would seem, to the chief person concerned, who, vaguely linked in hope and fancy to the pretty cousin of whom all his attendants had spoke to him all his life, thought of her still as he went forth upon his travels, sending her such a token of remembrance as an Alpine rose gathered on the Rigi, a book of prints to show his route from time to time; very natural, simple tokens of the delicate amity ripening into warmer emotion, such as pass every day between youth and maiden on the verge of love.

This simple record, however, is soon interrupted by an event which looks all the more great and overwhelming from these simple surroundings. There was great din and bustle of contending political parties at the time when William IV. was taken by his death illness. No struggle of great principles or great measures, no Reform Bill or other large public commotion in the way; but the still more absorbing, though much less worthy, conflict of parties, embittered by the fact that the King had ranged himself on the Opposition side, an unconstitutional proceeding which has

THE LIFE OF QUEEN VICTORIA

scarcely ever taken place since. All this made her Accession more difficult to the young creature who was his successor. The present writer remembers as one of the first public incidents that caught her childish eye the broad black borders of the newspapers which announced King William's death. Princess Victoria was then eighteen, the age at which Royal personages attain their majority, so there was happily no question of a Regency. The King died during the night, and it is said that the official intimation was made to the Duchess of Kent and her daughter next morning before five o'clock, the news having been expected for some days. The account of the proceedings that followed, and the demeanour of the young Queen, we take from the celebrated "Journal" of Mr. C. E. Greville, a book so full of posthumous indiscretions that its praise may be accepted fully as sincere. "The King died at twenty minutes after two yesterday morning, and the young Queen met the Council at Kensington Palace at eleven. Never was anything like the first impression she produced, or the chorus of praise and admiration which is raised about her manner and behaviour, and certainly not without justice. It was very extraordinary, and certainly something far beyond what was looked for. . . . Her youth and inexperience, and the ignorance of the world concerning her, naturally excited intense curiosity to see how she would act on this trying occasion, and there was a considerable assemblage at the Palace, notwithstanding the short notice that was given. The first thing to be done was to teach her her lesson, which for this purpose Melbourne had himself to learn. I gave him the Council papers, and explained all that was to be done, and he went and explained all this to her. He asked, too, if she would enter the room, accompanied by the great officers of State, but she said she would come in alone. When the Lords were assembled the Lord President informed them of the King's death, and suggested as they were so numerous that a few of them should repair to the presence of the Queen, and inform her of the event, and that their lordships were assembled in consequence; and accordingly the two Royal Dukes the two Archbishops, the Chancellor, and Melbourne went with him. The Queen received them in the adjoining room alone. As soon as they had returned the proclamation was read, and the usual order passed, when the doors were thrown open, and the Queen entered, accompanied by her two uncles, who advanced to meet her. She bowed to the Lords, took her seat, and then read her Speech in a clear, distinct, and audible voice, and without any appearance of fear or embarrassment. She was quite plainly dressed, and in mourning. After she had read her Speech, and taken and signed the oath for the security of the Church of Scotland, the Privy Councillors were sworn, the two Royal Dukes first by themselves—and at these two old men, her uncles, knelt before her swearing allegiance and kissing her hand. I saw her blush up to the eyes, as if she felt the contrast between their civil and their natural relations, and this was the only sign of emotion which she evinced. Her manner to them was very graceful and engaging. She kissed them both, rose from her chair, and moved towards the Duke of Sussex, who was furthest from her, and too infirm to reach her. She seemed rather bewildered at the multitude of men who were sworn, and who came one after the other to kiss her hand, but she did not speak to anybody, nor did she make the slightest difference in her manner, or show any in her countenance, to any individual of any rank, station, or party . . . . She went through the whole ceremony, occasionally looking at Melbourne for instruction when she had any doubt what to do, which hardly ever occurred, and with perfect calmness and self-possession, but at the same time with a graceful modesty and propriety particularly interesting and ingratiating. When the business was done she rose and curtsied."



H.R.H. THE DUKE OF KENT, FATHER OF THE QUEEN
FROM THE PICTURE IN THE POSSESSION OF THE DUKE OF LEINSTER

It is not wonderful that, after this remarkable scene was over, the statesmen, touched and charmed, should stand together in a sort of conversation talking over this strange young apparition in the midst of them—a creature so different from the old King who had formerly claimed their often reluctant homage? A new sense of loyalty mingled with chivalry and paternal tenderness and admiration rose in their minds.

"Peel told me . . . . how amazed he was at her manner and behaviour, at her apparent deep sense of her situation, her modesty and at the same time her firmness; she appeared in fact to be awed but not daunted. And afterwards the Duke of Wellington told me the same thing, and added that if she had been his own daughter he could not have desired to see her perform her part better. It was settled that she was to hold a Council at St. James's this day, and he proclaimed there at ten o'clock, and she expressed a wish to see Lord Altamarle, who went to her, and told her he was come to take her orders. She said 'I have no orders to give; you know all this so much better than I do, that I leave it all to you. I am to be at St. James's at ten to-morrow, and must beg you to find me a conveyance proper for the occasion.' Accordingly he went and fetched her in State with a great escort. . . . . I rode down the Park, and saw her appear at the window when she was proclaimed. The Duchess of Kent was there, but not prominent; the Queen was surrounded by her Ministers, and curtsied repeatedly to the people. . . . . At twelve she held a Council, at which she presided with as much ease as if she had been doing nothing else all her life, and though Lord Lansdowne and my colleague had contrived between them to make some confusion with the Council papers she was not put out by it. She looked very well, and although so small in stature, and without much pretension to beauty, the gracefulness of her manner and the good expression of her countenance give her on the whole a very agreeable appearance, and with her youth inspire an excessive interest in all who approach her, and which I can't help feeling myself.

"Conyngham, when he came to her with the intelligence of the King's death, brought a request, from the Queen Dowager that she might be permitted to remain at Windsor till after the funeral, and she has written her a letter couched in the kindest terms, begging her to consult nothing but her own health and convenience, and to remain at Windsor just as long as she pleases. In short, she appears to act with every kind of good taste and good feeling, as well as good sense; and, as far as it has gone, nothing can be more favourable than the impression she has made.

Higher testimony than this could scarcely be. We find another description from outside of the latter ceremony—the Presentation at St. James's—from a very different kind of witness. It is given by the late Miss Martineau in her well known "Autobiography," and gives a different aspect of the scene. The reader will be amused to note the difference between the respectful enthusiasm of the first narrator, who saw and heard at first hand, and was in communication with all those who had the best opportunity of judging, and the patronising approval of the lady, who had no more than a by-stander's knowledge of the external aspect of affairs:—

"In the course of the morning," she says, "a friend came to invite my old ladies to go with him to a place near, where they could at their ease see the Queen presented to the people. They went into the Park, and stood in front of the window of St. James's Palace, where among other places the Sovereigns are proclaimed and presented. Scarcely half-a-dozen people were there, for very few were aware of the custom." There stood the young creature in the simplest mourning, with her sleek bands of brown hair as plain as it is here. The tears ran fast down her cheeks as Lord Melbourne stood by her side, and she was presented to the half-dozen lookers-on as their Sovereign."

Even this less dignified description, however, though not intended to convey any very favourable impression, is full of interest, and shows, though by another side, the universal touch of emotion in the mind of the country, small and great, towards this slight girl of eighteen, looking out royally, if somewhat wistfully, upon the world of which she was mistress, in all the freshness and glory of that Midsummer. The "old ladies" were not so much impressed by her dignity and calm as the statesmen were, and probably conjectured the tears, and felt themselves able to divine the fluttering of the heart within so young a bosom. The same witness describes the young Majesty as being "really pretty in the upper part of the face, and with an ingenuous and sincere air which seemed full of promise"—the same genuine, yet candid, open-eyed, and straightforward look, which makes the portrait taken at this period remarkable. There is a picture in the Corridor at Windsor Castle, not of any great excellence in point of art, but affecting and interesting from the higher human charm which gives these public pageants of succession a quite new and peculiar attraction. It is called "the Queen's First Council," and shows us the Girl-Queen, so young and slight and childlike in appearance, seated with a grave simplicity among the veterans of the Council. It would be difficult to imagine anything more touching.

The Coronation took place on the 28th June, 1838. The same authority whom we have just quoted—Miss Martineau—gives a rather graphic account of the scene. "The sight of the rapid filling of the Abbey was enough to go for." She says:—

"The stone architecture contrasted finely with the gay colours of the multitude. From my high seat I commanded the whole north transept, the area with the throne, and many portions of galleries, and the balconies which were called the vaultings. Except a mere sprinkling of oddities, everybody was in full dress. The scarlet of the military officers mixed in well, and the groups of the clergy were dignified; but to an unaccustomed eye the prevalence of Court dresses had a curious effect. I was perpetually taking whole groups of gentlemen for Quakers, till I recollected myself. The Earl Marshal's assistants, called Gold Sticks, looked well from above, lightly flitting about in white breeches, silk stockings, blue-laced frocks, and white sashes. The throne, covered, as was its footstool, with cloth of gold, stood on an elevation of four steps in the centre of the area. The first peeress took her seat in the north transept opposite at a quarter to seven, and three of the bishops came next. From that time the peers and their ladies arrived faster and faster. Each peeress was conducted by two Gold Sticks, one of whom handed her to her seat, and the other took and arranged her train to her liking, and saw that her coronet, footstool, and book were comfortably placed. . . . . About nine the first gleams of the sun started into the Abbey, and presently travelled down to the peeresses. I had never before seen the full effect of diamonds. As the light travelled each lady shone out as a rainbow. The brightness, vastness, and dreamy magnificence of the scene produced a strange effect of exhaustion and sleepiness. . . . . The guns told when the Queen set forth; and there was unusual animation. The Gold Sticks flitted about; there was tuning in the orchestra; and the foreign Ambassadors and their suites arrived in quick succession. Prince Esterhazy, crossing a bar of sunshine, was the most prodigious rainbow of all. He was covered with diamonds and pearls; and as he dangled his hat it cast a dazzling radiance all round. . . . At half-past eleven the guns told that the Queen had arrived; but as there was much to do, more than an hour was a long pause before she appeared. A burst from the orchestra marked her appearance at the door, and the anthem 'I was glad' rang through the Abbey. Everybody rose. . . . The 'God Save the Queen' of the organ walled gloriously forth after the recognition. The acclamation when the crown was put on her head was very animated; and in the midst of it in an instant of time the peeresses were all coronetted. . . . . The homage was as pretty a sight as any—trains of peers touching her crown and then kissing her hand."

The glimmer of magnificence in this picture might be greatly enlarged upon, but that could be better done by an artist than by a writer—though the one instance before alluded to, "the simultaneous self-coronetting of the peeresses" as the Queen's crown was put on, seems new to us, and a picturesque incident in the pageant. The Queen herself looked "small," though regal, in the cloth of gold mantle, the centre of all that glittering crowd."

Born 1773 Died 1843
THE DUKE OF SUSSEX, UNCLE TO THE QUEEN

THE QUEEN AT THE AGE OF TWO, AND HER MOTHER
From the Painting by Sir W. Beechey in Windsor Castle

Born 1790 Died 1865
LEOPOLD, KING OF THE BELGIANS, UNCLE TO THE QUEEN

Impressive and beautiful though the scene may have been the jaundiced eye of Greville, the Clerk of the Council, seems to have been troubled by little hitches in the ceremonial. In the Second Part of his Memoirs he writes: "The different actors were very imperfect in their parts, and had neglected to rehearse them. Lord John Thynne, who officiated for the Dean of Westminster, told me that nobody knew what was to be done except the Archbishop and himself (who had rehearsed), Lord Willoughby (who is experienced in those matters), and the Lords of Wellington's and consequently there was a continual difficulty and embarrassment, and the Queen never knew what she was to do next. They made her leave her chair, and enter into St. Edward's Chapel, before the prayers were concluded, much to the discomfiture of the Archbishop. She said to [Lord] John Thynne, 'Pray tell me what I am to do, for they don't know;' and at the end, when the orb was put into her hand, she said to him, 'What am I to do with it?' 'Your Majesty is to carry it, if you please, in your hand.' 'Am I?' she said; 'it is very heavy.' The ruby ring was made for her little finger instead of the fourth, on which the rubric prescribes that it should be put. When the Archbishop was to put it on, she extended the former, but he said it must be on the latter. She said it was too small, and she could not get it on. He said it was right to put it there, and, as he insisted, she yielded, but had first to take off her other rings, and then this was forced on; but it hurt her very much, and as soon as the ceremony was over she was obliged to bathe her finger in iced water in order to get it off. The noise and confusion were very great when the medals were thrown about by Lord Surrey, everybody scrambling with all their might and main to get them, and none more vigorously than the Maids of Honour."

While all these pageants were going on, however, and everything flashing into splendour, turning into gold at the touch of her small hand, the immediate circle of advisers and friends around the young Sovereign fed her with no flatteries or foolish exultation. Her mother, who had watched over her so closely, now withdrew, as etiquette and necessity required, from at least the constant companionship in which they had previously lived. But Baron Stockmar remained at the Queen's elbow, the private representative of his Royal master and friend King Leopold; and that anxious guardian himself never abated his vigilance, watching over every step his young niece took, and always ready to counsel her. And from this wise uncle to the young cousin setting out upon his travels, who had heard of her elevation with a beating heart, all the friendly princely circle breathed exhortation to duty and conscientious endeavour in the young Queen's ear. "Now you are Queen of the mightiest land in Europe, in your hand lies the happiness of millions," said young Prince Albert in his letter of congratulation. He was going to Italy, in the freedom of a life less burdened, less full of splendid care than hers, yet not without a thought that his very wanderings were none time to be of service to her. "May heaven assist you," he adds, "and strengthen you with its strength in that high and difficult task." Under no light aspect was the young Queen permitted to contemplate her new position, and no doubt this profound sense of the gravity of a great office produced "the astonishing self-possession" at which her anxious kinsfolk themselves wondered, and which the English statesmen regarded with such an unanimous impulse of honest admiration.

THE QUEEN AT THE AGE OF ELEVEN
From the Painting by Richard Westall, R.A., in Windsor Castle

THE QUEEN AT THE AGE OF TEN
From the Painting by William Fowler

Also dining with the Duke of Kent, Sir Walter Scott has left on record that he was presented by Prince Leopold "to the little Princess Victoria, the Hope Apparent to the House, as things now stand."

SIR WALTER SCOTT BEING INTRODUCED TO THE QUEEN (THEN PRINCESS VICTORIA)

DRAWN BY W. HATHERELL, R.I.

THE SOUTH SIDE

THE VIEW FROM THE BALLROOM

CLAREMONT, WHERE THE QUEEN SPENT "THE HAPPIEST DAYS" OF HER CHILDHOOD

Of the short interval which followed of the young Queen's reign alone there is little record. She herself speaks of it with expressions of regret, not unusual in an exceptionally pure and virtuous life, where a little youthful levity, looking back over the fair landscape of well-spent years, seems almost like a crime. The brighter that landscape is, the more profound looks the innocent shadow of the morning cloud. "The sudden change from the secluded life at Kensington to the independence of her position as Queen-regnant at the age of eighteen," might have been an excuse for many mistakes. But it is hard to see what there is to pardon. She was guilty of one little constitutional sin, which, we may make bold to say now, amused the nation fully more than it alarmed it. Lord Melbourne had resigned, who was the Queen's first Minister and devoted personal friend, besides being the head of the party to which all her training had inclined her, and Sir Robert Peel was prepared to take his place; but the efforts of the Conservative Premier were frustrated by the refusal of the Queen to change her Mistress of the Robes and Bedchamber Ladies—an unforeseen proceeding which had the result of deferring the change for a short time. More violent personal demonstrations, however, had taken place under the previous Kings, none of whom had professed that absolute impartiality in respect to the two great parties in the political world which the Queen's example and steady practice throughout her long subsequent reign has made familiar to us. But naturally the error of judgment, if it went so far, made by a girl of twenty was pounced upon by critics to whom the pranks of an elderly King appeared justifiable. And no doubt had a wilful habit been established of this kind, and an English Sovereign taken up the irritating position of confounding all the plans of politicians, and baffling the wish of the country by such means, the situation might have become serious. As it was, a certain grateful sense of naturalness comes in, when we find the Queen's one public fault in her long career to have been of this character. It was in May, 1839, nearly two years after her accession, that the incident occurred. "It is well understood now," says Mr. Theodore Martin, in his "Life of the Prince Consort," "that there was misunderstanding on both sides; but the immediate effect was to exasperate the Tory party by the feeling that a tottering Ministry owed its continuance in office to the personal predilections of the Sovereign." Nowadays, however, nobody can suppose that there was any danger to the Constitution in the act, and the episode remains an amusing and characteristic one, lighting up the dulness of politics with a picturesque incident. Never again did Her Majesty depart from the Constitutional impartiality which looks upon Whig and Tory, Conservative and Liberal with the same calm confidence and friendliness; and we confess, for our own part, that this one little "fling" of youthful impetuosity gives to ourselves a more affectionate realisation of the character and difficulties of the Queen.

She herself, however, judges herself more severely, and has recorded her painful recollection of this moment of early freedom, when, perhaps, her head was slightly turned by the splendour and absolute freedom of her great position. "A worse school for a young girl, or one more detrimental to all natural feelings and affections, cannot well be imagined," Her Majesty says, with profound gravity and feeling. Such being the case, as she tells, who can judge how, it is satisfactory that so little harm came of it. To the pure all things are pure, even to the delightful follies of youth. Miss Martineau, the most unfavourable of critics, who has something disagreeable to say of most people she mentions, and to whom the monarchy altogether was "unreal," says of the young Queen that she laughed and talked on all occasions when this censor beheld her—a pleasant fault. Another shortcoming of Her Majesty during this interval of gaiety was that all ideas of marriage were put out of her mind by the whirl of busy life and independent action. Her girlhood had been so sober, her whole life so retired and quiet, that the dazzle and movement of the great world delighted her. In the revulsion of feeling she preferred London to the country, a preference curiously unlike the sentiments of her later life, though not remarkable, it must be allowed, between the ages of eighteen and twenty, a period at which few young persons of any rank prefer quiet to amusement. However, this gay interval was not to last long. And in this same year, 1839, there occurred the charming little romance—better known probably than any other romance of real life in this century, and delightful in its quaint variety of circumstance, so unlike yet so like the perennial love-tale, which was to open to Queen Victoria the happy doors of Home, and begin for her that domestic life in which her noblest influence, as well as her best happiness, lay.

THE QUEEN AT THE AGE OF SEVENTEEN
From the Painting by Sir George Hayter

King William IV. died at Windsor, early in the morning of June 20, 1837. As soon as possible, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Lord Chamberlain started to convey the tidings to Princess Victoria at Kensington. The Princess, on being told that they came on business of State, came into the room, "a shawl thrown over her dressing-gown, her feet in slippers, and her hair falling down her back." She had been awakened by the Duchess of Kent, who told her she must get up. She was greeted by the Lord Chamberlain as "Your Majesty" when he announced the death of her uncle, the King

"YOUR MAJESTY": THE QUEEN RECEIVING THE NEWS OF WILLIAM IV.'S DEATH

9

A ROYAL ROMANCE

PRINCE ALBERT, as we have said, had come to England in the year 1836, when he and his Royal cousin were seventeen. The two young people had pleased each other; they were alike in their tastes, loving music both of them, and art—playing on the piano together, as the Queen has recorded, and sharing the sight-seeings and events of the moment, from a sermon in St. Paul's to a ball at Kensington Palace. After this, King Leopold, who was the uncle of both, had communicated with the Princess on the subject, and had received an innocent frank response from her, accepting the idea with something of the readiness of a child, to whom an arrangement affecting her whole life was as simple as if it had been a holiday institution. Since that time, however, no active steps had been taken. The Prince had been travelling, studying, working hard as always at the cultivation and perfection of his life, with nothing as yet clearly decided how that life was to be spent. And after the Queen's Accession, when she was herself full of the excitement and business of such a great beginning, she had expressed herself as desirous of delay. "The change had put all ideas of marriage out of her mind"—a fact which Her Majesty describes herself as "bitterly regretful"—but which must have appeared a wise decision enough to the outside spectator, unacquainted, as all lookers-on must have been, with the remarkable and quite exceptional qualities possessed by Prince Albert.

Indeed, in this case it is the young Princess, with only her instinct of what was best to guide her, rather than the anxious uncle, full of sagacity and experience as he was, of whom an imperfect critic would have approved. King Leopold wrote to his niece in the beginning of 1838, pressing that some "decisive arrangement" might be come to. To this Her Majesty demurred, for reasons which her uncle considered conclusive, and which those who know the world best will agree were dictated by sound practical judgment. She was herself, she urged, too young; so also was the Prince; and being, still under age a marriage with him would be considered by her subjects as premature. Moreover, his mastery of the English language was still very imperfect, and if he was to take up a proper position in England it was important that this defect should be remedied; and that he should also have a wider experience, more practical habits of observation, and more self-reliance than it was possible he could up to that time have acquired.

Nothing could be more sensible than these conclusions. The Queen explains that they arose from no change of opinion on her part. She "never thought of" any one else, and if perhaps an inclination to enjoy for a little the innocent freedom of her girlhood before entering upon the graver chapter of married life was in her mind, what could be more natural? She "fair young maiden" in the West," the "Imperial votaress" at whom Cupid's shaft was thus prematurely launched, evaded the all-penetrating arrow, and passed on like her predecessor "in maiden meditation fancy free" for the moment." But not like Elizabeth, whose solitary state was a matter at once of policy and pride. No such deeply rooted plan was in Queen Victoria's mind. She was coy, as every young maiden has a right to be, and disposed to hold at arm's length the assured happiness which might have come an hour too soon had the wiser people had their way. Nor is it wonderful if she was trembling on those edder spectators whose hearts were set upon the connection of which they had so long seen the supreme appropriateness. Who could tell what fancy might sweep through either of these youthful hearts, destroying all the careful plans in a moment—for there is no certainty so certain, everybody

Born 1779 Died 1848
LORD MELBOURNE, THE QUEEN'S FIRST PRIME MINISTER

Born 1769 Died 1852
THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON, COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF WHEN THE QUEEN CAME TO THE THRONE

THE FIRST COUNCIL OF THE QUEEN, HELD AT KENSINGTON ON JUNE 20, 1837

FROM THE PICTURE BY SIR DAVID WILKIE, R.A., IN WINDSOR CASTLE

THE CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY, JUNE 28, 1838

FROM THE PICTURE BY SIR GEORGE HAYTER

HER MAJESTY RECEIVING THE SACRAMENT AFTER THE CORONATION AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY, JUNE 28, 1838

FROM THE PICTURE BY F. WINTERHALTER

THE MARRIAGE OF QUEEN VICTORIA AND PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTHA, AT ST. JAMES'S PALACE, FEBRUARY 10, 1840

FROM THE PAINTING BY SIR GEORGE HAYTER IN WINDSOR CASTLE

knows, as that the most careful arrangements about marriage constantly fall through, and that on both sides the heart is much more ready to choose where it ought, not than where it ought. This consciousness must have kept the advisers in a ferment, while the young Queen held back in shy maidenhood, and the young Prince with natural impatience would run his fate. He went to Italy, however, as the best occupation for his time of suspense, and after returning from that tour was permitted to go to England with his brother on a visit from which he at least it is a parent expected no particular results. "The Queen declared to my uncle of Belgium that she wished the affair to be considered as broken off and that for four years she would think of no marriage," the Prince himself wrote to one of his anxious friends, with perhaps a little suspicion of wounded feeling in the words: "I mean, therefore, with quiet but firm resolution, to declare on my part that I also withdraw entirely." How it was that, meeting with such serious intentions of bidding each other a dignified farewell, the young couple should have rushed into each other's arms instead, the lady forgetting her wisdom and the youth his dignity, let other young men and maidens say. It is a mystery, yet as common as love is, and youth.

It was in October of the year 1839 that the two young Coburg Princes thus came to England. They brought with them a letter from King Leopold, which ran as follows:—

high intelligence in his clear blue eyes and expansive forehead, that added a charm to the effect he produced in those who saw him, far beyond that derived from mere regularity or beauty of features." He was as good as he was handsome, full of high purpose and the most delicate conscientiousness. No lover, more likely to please ever appeared in lady's bower.

And the life in the beautiful old Castle in those mellow autumn days was gay and bright as heart could desire. The head of the house was young and light hearted, the visitors all proud and happy to contribute to her amusement, and to keep the palace gay. "The way of life in Windsor during the stay of the Princes was much as follows:—The Queen breakfasting in her own room, they afterwards paid her a visit there; and at two o'clock had luncheon with her and the Duchess of Kent. In the afternoon they all rode, the Queen and Duchess and the two Princes, with Lord Melbourne and most of the ladies and gentlemen in attendance, forming a large cavalcade. There was a great dinner every evening, with a dance after it three times a week." This pleasant routine went on for a week. The brothers had arrived on the 8th, Prince Albert and Queen Victoria being then forth of a mind (to believe their own statements) that the rank understanding between them was over, and they would not marry, nor they, for years to come. But before the 15th something had changed the notions of the young pair. What it was who

Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen
Es schwimmt das Herz in Seligkeit
Upon the eyes Heaven opens bright:
The heart is floated with delight.

There is no more beautiful passage in Poetry than that from which these lines are taken, and which would be remembered in all its beautiful warmth and completeness by the correspondent in whose kind ear the Prince poured forth his joy.

All this charming little idyll is told to us by the chief actor in it—the Queen herself, in the fullness of her heart; and the wonderful humility and simplicity with which she throughout puts herself in the secondary place is one of the most remarkable exhibitions of womanly nature that ever was revealed to the world. "How I will strive to make him feel as little as possible the great sacrifice he has made," she says in her "Journal," noting down the events of that wonderful day. "I told him it was a great sacrifice on his part, but he would not allow it." No doubt the Queen's imagination pictured forth a whole brilliant world of conquest and victory which her hero was giving up to be her companion. Never was a more complete instance of that softening and tender humility which is one of the first consequences in a generous and pure mind of happy love. A delicious wonder took possession of both to find themselves thus beloved.

THE QUEEN IN MILITARY COSTUME AT A REVIEW AT WINDSOR IN 1837
From the Picture by Prentice

THE QUEEN AT THE AGE OF TWENTY
From the Portrait by R. J. Lane, A.R.A.

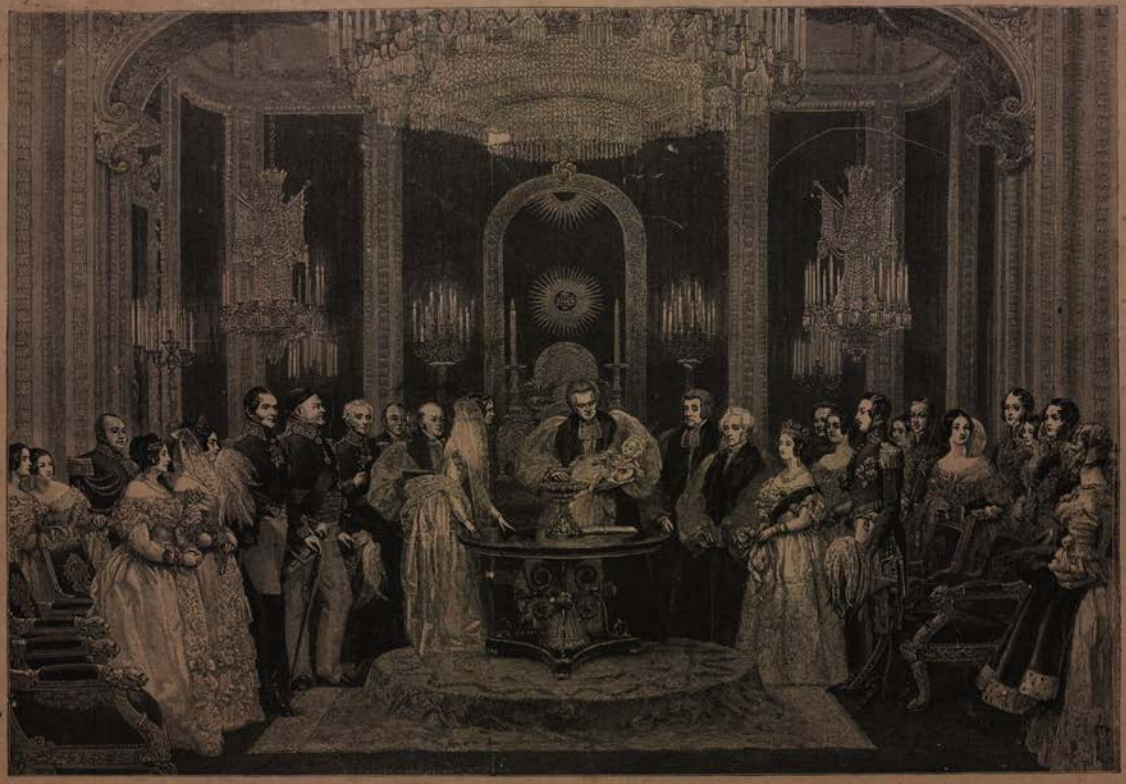
"MY DEAREST VICTORIA,

"Your cousins will themselves be the bearers of these lines. I recommend them to you. They are good and honest creatures, deserving your kindness; not pedantic, but really sensible and trustworthy. I have told them that your great wish is that they should be quite at their ease with you.

The young men arrived. Their cousin, no longer the little girl of Kensington in the homely old-fashioned house, but a great Queen, received them at the top of the royal staircase amid all the magnificence of Windsor Castle, as if these two wandering knights had been emperors. But, after this grand reception, the commonest of incidents brings back the princely travellers and the royal circle into the sympathy of homelier life. Their portmanteaus, it is to be supposed, had gone astray, as happens to so many of us—or at least did not arrive in time—and the dinner hour was near. "Their clothes not having arrived," the Queen writes in her "Journal," "they could not appear at dinner, but came in after it in spite of their morning clothes." There was a circle of visitors assembled—and no doubt some little tremor in the air—wonderings and whisperings, and close watching of all the looks and words interchanged between the cousins. Prince Albert was now full-grown, in all the freshness of youth, the age at which a handsome youth is handsomest, before any of the bloom has been rubbed off. "There was in his countenance a gentleness of expression and a peculiar sweetness in his smile, with a look of deep thought and could tell? They were just as young as ever, and they had so prudently concluded that they were too young—but they felt themselves too young no longer. Whatever clouds there had been on the horizon had all blown away before the soft breezes on Windsor Hill, and the air of the woods through which they had ridden together, the morning talks, the evening glances. Yet the wooing was not all easy and plain before them as before other pairs. There were not the days in which any noble knight, even if not a prince, could address a Queen. What had to be said must be said by her, not by him—a strange necessity. But no doubt it seems a more difficult matter in talking of it than it was in the doing of it. When the young Prince was summoned alone to the young Sovereign's presence no doubt the first glance, the first word, was enough to tell him that his cause was won. "After a few minutes' conversation the Queen told him why she had sent for him." A happy mist falls over all that was said and done. When the young pair emerge from it and are seen again in ordinary mortals, there is a haze of gladness about them which, all unawares, each expresses in almost the same words. "They, for days have passed like a dream to me, and I am so much bewildered by it all that I know hardly how to write; but I do feel very happy," writes the Queen to her uncle—he to whom this good news would be so welcome. And "more I can't write to you, for at this moment I am too bewildered," says the Prince on his side, striking, as became him, a bolder note, and throwing his rapture and happiness into the words of the poet—

The happy agitation in the Castle that day, the letters that were written, the whispers that ran through the delighted Court, the couriers that were sent off laden with the news, may easily be divined. Ernest—good brother and sympathetic spectator—was sent for instantly to congratulate and rejoice with them. The kind Premier in attendance, Lord Melbourne, approved and rejoiced too, and there was nothing but happy wishes and anticipations round. "He seems perfection," says the young Queen in her happiness. On the very day on which all this was taking place, King Leopold from his Belgian Tuileries, not dreaming, for all his wisdom, how rapid a course young hearts could take when left to themselves, was writing in playful recommendation of his nephews. "I am sure you will like them the more, the longer you see them," he says, all unaware that just then the young man of whom he said that no "puppy-like affectation" was to be found in him, had become "perfection" in the royal lady's eyes. How sincerely happy he was need not be said. He has "almost the feeling of old Simeon," he writes with affecting tenderness. "Now letting thou thy servant depart in peace."

In ordinary cases, when this climax has been arrived at, the excitement is over and the happy marriage may be announced in a sentence, all the real drama of the love tale having been played out; but the position of the Queen was so unique and remarkable that every step was full of interest. The young pair remained together for above a month, keeping their secret from all but their



THE CHRISTENING OF THE PRINCESS ROYAL IN THE THRONE ROOM AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

FROM THE PICTURE BY C. R. LESLIE, R.A., IN WINDSOR CASTLE

friends, and growing to know each other in the close intercourse of their betrothal. And it was not till the departure of the young lover had brought back common life and its cares, that the Queen nerved herself for the public declaration which no one could make for her. The situation is so peculiar that we know scarcely any precedent for it. Even now, when she had been two years on the throne, no Queen so young had ever reigned in England, and no English Queen had ever had such a moving tale to tell to her Privy Councillors. The young lady did it with the modest dignity which had from the first distinguished her. And here is the description of it she has herself given us, with her usual happy simplicity and straightforwardness. The Privy Council, knowing how important the sitting was, mustered strong. There were eighty gentlemen of them assembled in the "bow room in the ground-floor of Buckingham Palace," whom this young creature, with heart full, had to face alone, and tell what had happened to her. She had a bracelet upon her pretty wrist with the Prince's portrait, which "seemed to give me courage."

"Precisely at two o'clock" (the narrative is from the Queen's Journal) "I went in. The room was full, but I hardly knew who was there. Lord Melbourne I saw looking kindly at me with tears in his eyes, but he was not near me. I then read my short declaration. I felt that my hands shook, but I did not make one mistake. I felt most happy and thankful when it was over. Lord Lansdowne then rose, and in the name of the Privy Council asked that 'this most gracious and most welcome communication might be printed.' I then left the room, the whole thing not taking above two or three minutes. The Duke of Cambridge came into the small library where I was standing, and wished me joy."

This was not the only public intimation which her Majesty was forced, by the necessities of her position, to make of her intentions. The agitation which made the crowd of Privy Councillors indistinct to her as that she "hardly knew who was there," no doubt veiled in the same way the embarrassment of individual looks from the Queen, when nearly two months later she had to meet the great English Parliament, and repeat her tale. And no doubt the universal sympathy which surrounded her helped her to get through this trial too. Crowds gathered on the way to see her going to Parliament on that wintry morning a few weeks before her wedding day. They cheered her to the

THE QUEEN IN THE ROYAL PEW ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR IN 1841
From the Painting by H. E. Dawe

echo as she went along with her heart beating. Every seat was occupied in the House of Lords, and every voice which was raised there, after the intimation had been made, was of one unanimous tone. Not only were politics forgotten in the universal sympathy, but all classes of politicians alike approved of the Royal choice, and saw in it a guarantee of exemption from all those imperfections which had made Royal domestic life so far from exemplary during the last generations.

The statesmen who expressed the sentiments of England in its gravest Imperial dignity were as glad of the love-match as the plumpest sentimentalist could have been. "It frequently happens," said Sir Robert Peel, "that political considerations interfere with such transactions, and that persons in exalted stations are obliged to sacrifice their private feelings to the sense of public duty. Her Majesty, however, has the singular good fortune to be able to gratify her private feelings while she performs her public duty, and to obtain the best guarantee for happiness by contracting an alliance founded on affection." In short, her happy love, so simple, so natural and true, was the greatest public service which the Queen could have done to her country. And amid all foolishness to which the universal passion drives mankind, it is an exceptional privilege, worthy a maiden Queen, that to be able to rehabilitate honest love, and bring it into favour and fashion as not only the best but the wisest of sentiments, the legitimate crown of life and youth.

But though all was so happy in the main point it is not to be supposed that the course of true love ran absolutely smooth in this case any more than in others. No misunderstanding, indeed, seems ever to have crossed the happy accord of the two principal personages concerned, but never pair were more plagued by settlements and lawyers and troublesome parents and guardians than this Royal pair were by the still more troublesome punctilios of Parliament, the contentions of party, and the petty jealousies of rank.

Many of us on the lower levels of society profess to smile at the difficulties of precedence, and think it a question beneath the serious attention of reasonable people; but this is just one of the points in which ignorance alone is to blame for the want of sympathy so commonly shown, and a little exercise of the imagination will at once show how galling it must have been to the Queen of Great

THE QUEEN, THE PRINCE CONSORT, AND THE PRINCESS ROYAL, WITH THEIR FAVOURITE DOGS
FROM THE PICTURE BY SIR EDWIN LANDSEER, R.A., IN WINDSOR CASTLE

Britain to know that her husband might be pushed from her side in any Imperial ceremonial by some whippersnapper of a petty king's son or archduke's not worthy to tie his shoe. "When the Queen was abroad," Her Majesty herself tells us, "the Prince's position was always a subject of negotiation and vexation; the position accorded to him the Queen had always to acknowledge as a grace and favour bestowed on her by the Sovereigns whom she visited. While in 1856 the Emperor of the French treated the Prince as a Royal personage, his own uncle declined to come to Paris, because he would not give precedence to the Prince; and on the Rhine, in 1845, the King of Prussia would not give place to the Queen's husband, which common civility required, because of the presence of an Archduke, the *third son of an uncle* of the reigning Emperor of Austria, who would not give the *pas*, and whom the King would not offend. The only legal position in Europe, according to International law, which the husband of the Queen enjoyed was that of a younger brother of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, and this merely because the English law did not know of him." It cannot be wondered at that the refusal of the Parliament to settle this painful question, and the apparent want of generosity and liberality which made the House of Commons cut down the allowance made to Prince Albert from £50,000—the sum which had been granted to the husband of the Princess Charlotte—to £30,000, was very annoying

Government and upset by the Opposition, there were lesser points which demanded careful supervision—arrangements about the Prince's household and its officers, and many other details necessary to the comfort of the new establishment. The Queen herself tells us with her usual delightful naturalness and simplicity that "precedents were searched for to see what the Prince's household should consist of—but the one commonly referred to," she says with fine scorn, "was that of Prince George of Denmark, the very stupid and insignificant husband of Queen Anne." Insignificant, Queen Victoria knew her husband could never be, and her disdain of such an ignoble comparison is charmingly naïve and natural. All this doubtful and troublesome business made the interval between the Prince's departure and return a time of heaviness to the young couple. She had to bear in indignant silence all those apparent slights to him, inflicted it would seem in her own name, angry and wounded as she was by them; while he, for his part, had to go through the parting with his many affectionate relatives in Germany, which was trying to his tender heart, while the warmth of his welcome in England seemed to be rendered doubtful by these unkindly economies and debates. However, all this did not retard the marriage, which was fixed for the 10th February, 1840. When the Prince came back to England a few days before the wedding, there was no coldness in the welcome he received. It is not on has been most prominent, and this loyal wife of affection almost makes the reader believe that England was watching the Prince and his demeanor on this great occasion as much as that of her Queen. It is scarcely necessary, however, to say that, tender and beautiful as is the wifely love which would fain give this impression, it was not really so. The bride is the chief personage at every marriage feast, and pre-eminently so at this one, though she herself is often enough, as in this case, the only individual who does not perceive it. "The Queen's look and manner," Lady Lyttelton says, who was one of the Ladies-in-Waiting, "were very pleasing, her eyes much swollen with tears, but great happiness in her countenance, and her look of confidence and comfort at the Prince when they walked away as man and wife was very pleasing to see. I understand she is in extremely high spirits since. Such a new thing for her to dare to be unguarded in conversing with anybody, and, with her frank and fearless nature, the restraints she has hitherto been under from one reason or another with everybody must have been most painful."

The Queen, we are told, was received with "tremendous shouts" as she drove slowly along from Buckingham Palace to St. James's through such a crowd as had seldom assembled before even in loyal England. She was "extremely pale" as she passed along, under the gaze of multitudes, her mother by her side, crowned with nothing

"When Jenny Lind first sang in private before the Queen she was accompanied by the Queen's pianist, who, being somewhat out with a vivid chorus, played some tricks which annoyed Jenny exceedingly. This the quick ear of Her Majesty, who was an excellent musician, at once detected, and, as Jenny stood up for a second song, she marched the pianist aside, saying quietly, 'I will accompany Miss Lind myself,' which she did to perfection"

THE QUEEN ACCOMPANYING JENNY LIND AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE

to the Queen, who felt the apparent slight to her betrothed deeply. It was a kind of experience which broke harshly into the delight and happiness of the first engagement, in which everything was wholly satisfactory and happy. A check of this kind given in the heyday of hope and pleasure is naturally felt with a certain bitterness, and, however good might be the reasons for the economy thus practised at Prince Albert's expense, it seems a singular and most unnecessary piece of neglect to have left his position undefined. It would seem, however, that this was due to negligence so much as to the petty squabbles for which it afforded a fit occasion, and was not at all to be attributed to any lack of personal good feeling—an important distinction which the Prince himself, with his usual good sense, fully understood, and which the Queen allowed and believed, at least after further acquaintance with "the Tories" had subdued that feeling of partisanship which she sensibly acknowledges, and which was so natural in her circumstances. It was the Tories, then in Opposition, who procured these checks and discouragements to the young pair; and this was not likely to make the Queen—jealous as she was for the honour of him whom, then and ever after, she thought the most perfect of beings—more favourably disposed towards the party whom she had been brought up to dislike.

Besides these important matters, which were mismanaged by the such occasions that the English people show any lack of enthusiasm. From the moment he landed, eager crowds, shouting and cheering, met and followed him everywhere. He was young and handsome, all that the popular eye wanted to content its broad general sense of what was befitting in a Prince and a bridegroom, and the people were delighted that their Queen was making a love-match, more delighted with this mere fact than with all the grave Imperial reasons for it, and the admirable qualities of the bridegroom. It is one of the chief spells to which the simple popular imagination in England always answers. "It is this which makes your Majesty's marriage so popular," Lord Melbourne said; and there was not a humble bystander in the crowd who did not acknowledge so strong a claim upon their sympathy.

The 10th of February rose dull and cloudy, with frequent showers, and when the bridal party set out for St. James's, where the marriage took place—through streets thronged with spectators, who stood out undaunted through the rain and cold—the dull morning was all unlike the "Queen's weather" which had already become a proverb. The bride was, as is more or less the case with every bride, even the humblest, the chief point of attraction to everybody. In all the accounts that have been given of Her Majesty's marriage in the volumes which have been inspired by her and put forth under her guidance, it has been the figure of the Prince which but those pure flowers which are dedicated to the day of bridal, and not even permitted the luxury of a veil over her drooping face. The bare fell about her, but left her royal countenance unshielded, we are told, so that all might see. Even at that moment she belonged to her kingdom. When the procession returned after the ceremony, the courtly chronicle of the newspapers does not fail to record a change of expression quite according to all rules. Her Majesty had looked "anxious and excited," and "extremely pale" as she went to be married, but "she entered her own hall," coming back, with a joyous and open countenance, flushed, perhaps, in the slightest degree," and acknowledged the cheers with which she was greeted in the most smiling and condescending manner. Shortly after the clouds and showers disappeared as by magic, and the "Queen's weather" shone out triumphant. In the afternoon the bridal *cortège* set out for Windsor, driving all the way, for in those days the railways had not become the habitual and indispensable mode of travelling everywhere as they are nowadays. Almost all the way the road was lined and thronged by spectators, twenty-two miles of it, every soul turning out from the towns and villages on the way. "Our reception," the Queen says, "was most enthusiastic, hearty and gratifying in every way, the people quite deafening us with their cheers, horsemen, &c., going along with us." When they reached Windsor, the whole irregular line of the

THE QUEEN AS PHILIPPA, AND PRINCE CONSORT AS EDWARD III. AT THE PLANTAGENET BALL AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE.

"EVENING AT BALMORAL CASTLE"

FROM THE PICTURE BY CARL HAAG, GIVEN TO THE PRINCE CONSORT BY THE QUEEN, AUGUST 26, 1854

THE QUEEN RECEIVING KING LOUIS PHILIPPE IN WINDSOR CASTLE, OCTOBER 6, 184

FROM THE PICTURE BY F. X. WINTERHALTER, IN WINDSOR CASTLE

THE SCOTS FUSILIER GUARDS PARADING AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE, BEFORE THE QUEEN AND PRINCE CONSORT

TROOPS LEAVING LONDON FOR THE CRIMEA, FEBRUARY 28, 1854

FROM THE PICTURE BY G. H. THOMAS, IN HER MAJESTY'S PRIVATE COLLECTION

"A grand scene occurred once in the Rose Terrace at Windsor by the light of a full August moon. The Queen had been having a great dinner party, and afterwards led the way in all the glory of her evening gown and glittering jewels round the terrace while her guests and suite followed her. Every one was in full dress or uniform. The Castle, lit up in every window, made a fitting background to so picturesque a spectacle."

A BRILLIANT SCENE: AFTER A DINNER PARTY AT WINDSOR IN THE QUEEN'S EARLY MARRIED LIFE

DRAWN BY W. HATHERELL, R.I.

THE EMPEROR NAPOLEON III. AND THE PRINCE CONSORT AT BOULOGNE, SEPTEMBER 7, 1854

FROM THE PICTURE BY GEORGE H. THOMAS IN HER MAJESTY'S PRIVATE COLLECTION

THE QUEEN VISITING THE TOMB OF NAPOLEON I. IN THE PALAIS DES INVALIDES, PARIS, 1855

FROM THE PICTURE BY E. M. WARD, R.A., IN BUCKINGHAM PALACE

THE QUEEN AND THE PRINCE CONSORT, AND THE ROYAL FAMILY

FROM THE PAINTING BY F. WINTERHALTER

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH

picturesque little town, from Eton upwards to the Castle gates, sparkled with lights; and Eton turned out as one boy with one vast shout of delight and excitement to greet the bridal pair, and accompany them from its own bounds to the last practical step of the way, as far as even schoolboys could penetrate. Thus, with one universal cry of gladness, with a close accompaniment of sympathetic crowds, with every demonstration of kindness and affectionate interest which a country could give, the young pair were escorted to the very door of their home.

DOMESTIC LIFE

There is some truth as well as an evident and transparent foolishness in that expedient of fiction which terminates a story with marriage. It is scarcely credible that any imagination over sixteen could really believe that the troubles of life end there, and that "to live happy ever after" is the easy conclusion of the tale, after

THE CROWN PRINCE OF PRUSSIA
(Afterwards the Emperor Frederick)
At the time of his marriage, January 25, 1858

the hands of the lovers have been joined and all their early difficulties got over. But there is at the same time a certain human fitness and delicate justice in the sentiment. There is no crisis so simple and complete in all the after life—none that bears telling as well, or interests the hearer so completely, or which is so entirely individual to the person who excites our interest. In after years a hundred complications come in, and the unity of the youthful tale is disturbed by growing cares and increasing numbers. Marriage is an end, as death is—the end of one period, the beginning of another—when we pass that early conclusion which is joyful, nothing remains for us but to go on to another conclusion in which there is no joy—the end which is made across the human pathway by the sudden and impassable barrier of Death.

It is against that some such feeling as this must have moved the Queen herself when she came, long afterwards, in her sorrow and loneliness, to give forth the first memorials of her husband to the world. Those recollections centred in the tender and charming episode of romance which makes a flowery spot in most lives; and accordingly we have more details of this sunshiny and beautiful period than of any other. The young pair came to Windsor in their bridal happiness, on this best side of the people all along the road from London coming out to give it them, and cheer them, with that admiration and sympathy which, at such a moment, is universal, and attends even those who have much less right to the general interest. Thus their Queen should make a love-match, that the object of her choice should be so young and so handsome, that both together, a pair of blue-eyed simple lovers, should be seen in the first quiver and trembling of their happiness, an embodiment of the dream which comes to most human creatures once in their lives, a visible representation of the great subject of poetry and romance, was very captivating to the popular mind; but to the young pair it seems to have been that opening of the gates of Paradise which every marriage of true minds ought to be. The Queen herself has given us with touching simplicity many glimpses into a mind so loving, so humble in its greatness and happiness, the heart not of a woman much less of a monarch, but of a girl, astonished at her own blessedness, and grateful beyond all measure for the love which she returned so fully and warmly, and with which she had so much to bestow—that it would be a hard heart, indeed, which could refuse sympathy to those outbreaks of cordial and true feeling with which she herself took the table. The short period of solitary Queenhood, when she had been alone, appeared to her but as a painful passage to the happier and fuller life which had now opened to her. Her Majesty's confessions of imperfection are almost amusing in their innocence, for it is always the most imperfect conscience that is the most sensitive. The Prince loved the early hours and tranquil pleasures of the country; and his young wife not only conformed to these tastes with a happy docility which many humble brides fail in, but soon learned to make his standard hers, and to repent of the country habits, which looked by comparison wickedness. They were at first "very late in the morning, breakfasting at ten (which was the Queen's fault)," but soon changed in that respect, and might be seen out in the lovely park at Windsor, or wherever they might be, brushing the morning dews from the grass, and refreshing their young souls with the purity and freshness of the early day. And before she had been a year married

THE PRINCESS OF WALES
At the time of her marriage, March 10, 1863

THE PRINCESS ROYAL
(Afterwards the Empress Frederick)
At the time of her marriage, June 7, 1858

the young wife made to the young husband a pretty confession which was the highest of tender compliments. "I told Albert," the Queen says, "that formerly I was too happy to go to London, and wretched to leave it, and how, since the blessed hour of my marriage, and still more since the summer, I dislike and am unhappy to leave the country, and would be content and happy never to go to town." She adds—this is written in the year 1850, when she was a young lady of twenty-one, with all the world at her feet, and all its pleasures and splendours—"The solid pleasures of a peaceful, quiet, yet merry life in the country, with my inestimable husband and friend, my all in all, are far more durable than the amusements of London, though we don't despise or dislike them sometimes." A sentiment more English or more likely to delight the English people, who had not been fond of the last Royal generation, not at all edified by their domestic histories could not be. And this new Royal House, so natural and wholesome and happy, made all the atmosphere better round it, discouraging the evil and giving countenance to everything that was good. It is needless to tell how much Prince Albert had to do in the organisation and sustenance of this spotless and affectionate dwelling. The Queen was too anxious to give to her husband the entire credit of everything good in it to leave us in any doubt on the subject, and it was her endeavour to represent herself as always following, while he led the way. But the very existence of such an attitude on the part of a lady so illustrious is the highest testimony that could be given to her own ingenuous and modest character. It was not from Her Majesty that we were likely to hear what was her own share of the regulation of the well-ordered household life. All the glory, all the credit, she bestowed with a liberal hand upon him; and would have made out, if she could, that never were such sacrifices made, or such blessings shed around him, by any noble husband upon the simplest cottage maiden whom he had chosen for his wife. Such sentiments have a wonderful piquancy in the midst of their frankness and unfeigned generosity and humility as coming from the lips of one who had everything to give, and whose position of supremacy made of every such yielding of the superior place a special grace.

This generous gratitude for every mark of affection and humble-

ness of solicitude is apparent in all the Queen said at this period of her life. When her husband was about to part with the relations and friends who had attended him at his marriage, her tender sympathy was quite remarkable. At such a moment it may be pardoned to a young woman, even when all the external circumstances are reversed, and the bridegroom gives more than he receives, to feel herself the principal person, and well watch any family relinquishment that may be made for her. This, in short, we suspect is the general feeling with brides who are not always tolerant of regret on the husband's part for any old association, and are disposed to take any sign of the mingled feelings common to every change of life—any indication of possible loss on his part to balance the acquisition he has just made—as an offence against their newly acquired right to the entire possession of his heart. To such brides the Queen's example ought to come with especial force.

THE PRINCE OF WALES
At the time of his marriage, March 10, 1863

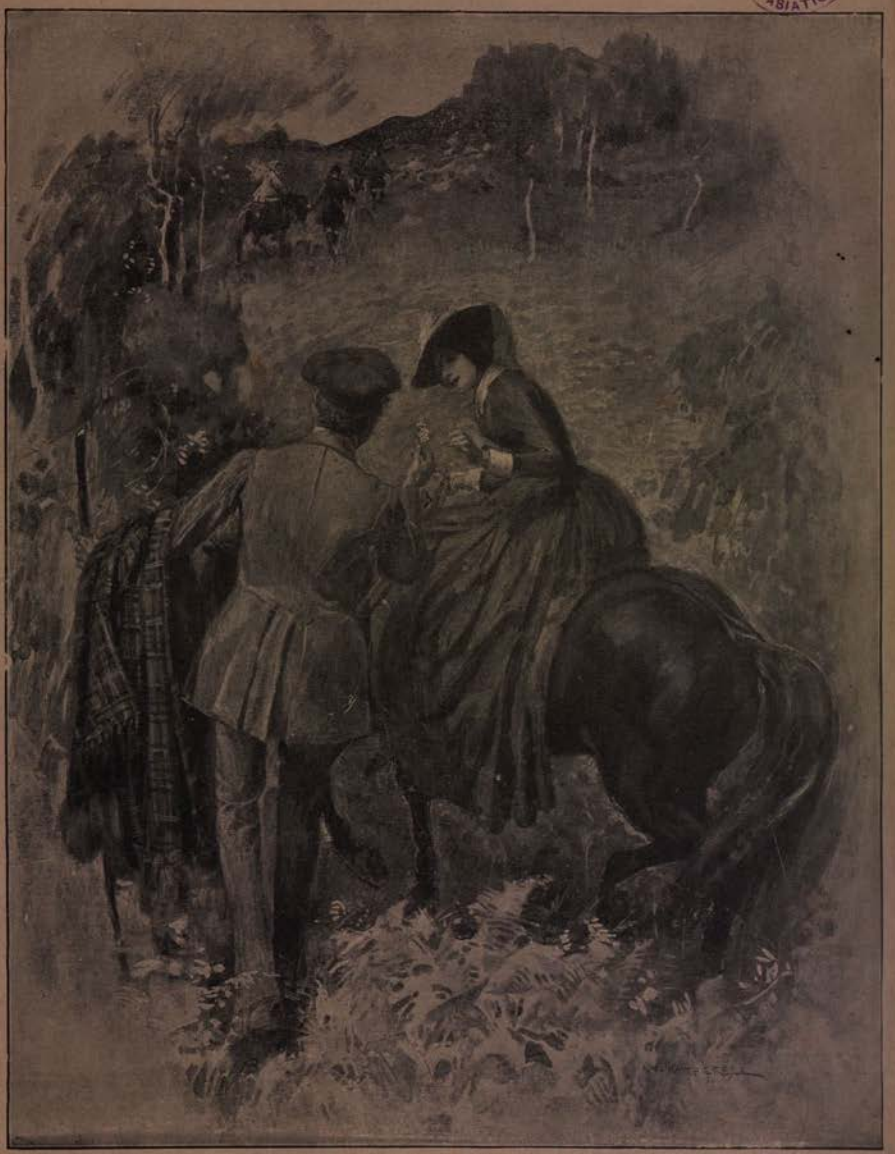
Prince Albert's only brother paid the young married pair a more prolonged visit than the other members of the family, and when he too departed in his turn, the Queen's sympathy with her husband in the deprivation was most thorough, and even impassioned. "Oh, how I feel for my dearest, precious husband at this moment!" she exclaims, with all a young girl's fervour of feeling. "Father, brother, friends, country—all has he left; and all for me. God grant that I may be the happy person, the *most* happy person, to make this dearest, blessed being happy and contented. What is in my power to make him happy I will do." The Prince, on the other hand, assures his bride, even in the pang of parting with his own people, "that if I continued to love him as I did now, I could make up for all." These simple mutual pledges and hopes, the interchange of sentiment which is common to peasants and to kings, show upon what foundation the Royal House was established. Paul and Virginia could not have said anything different had they ever come to that crown of youthful happiness.

And the young pair, so happy in their love, were also happy in their mutual tastes. Both were fond of music and art, and well instructed in both. Here is the Queen's own sketch of a day of their life, with all its occupations and amusements:—

"They breakfasted at nine, and took a walk every morning soon afterwards; then came the usual amount of business (far less heavy, however, than now), besides which they drew and etched a great deal together, which we both enjoyed very much, I pasting the plates *in* in the house. Luncheon followed at the usual hour of two o'clock. Lord Melbourne (the Prime Minister at the time) came to the Queen in the afternoon, and between five and six the Prince generally drove her out in a sunny phaeton. If the Prince did not drive the Queen he rode, in which case she took a drive with the Duchess of Kent or the ladies. The Prince also rode about most days to the Queen. The dinner was at eight o'clock, and always with the company. . . . The hours were never late, and it was very seldom that the party had not broken up at eleven o'clock." There must have been exceptions to this rule, however, as "The Queen also gave many dinners, often followed by little dances, and they went frequently to the play, of which the Prince was always very fond." One of the first studies which they took up together was that of music; for which, so far as many other branches of Art, Prince Albert had both taste and talent. The example of the Queen and Prince no doubt greatly stimulated the study of classical music in England, and fostered that more enlightened appreciation of it which now exists. Nothing, however, can show the musical tastes of the young Royal household at this time so well as the following letter from Mendelssohn, which is so graphic and so genuine, and gives so clear a glimpse of the Queen herself, in her own kind and friendly person, that we may be permitted to quote it at length. It is dated July 19th, 1842, two years after the Queen's marriage.

"I must tell you [Mendelssohn is writing to his mother] all the details of my last visit to Buckingham Palace. It is as E. says, the one really pleasant and thoroughly comfortable English house, where one feels *à son aise*. Of course I do know a few others, but still on the whole I agree with him. Joking apart, Prince Albert had asked me to go to him on Saturday at two o'clock, so that I might try his organ before I left England; I found him alone, and

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY



"Prince Frederick William of Prussia," wrote the Crown Princess in Diary (on September 4, 1858), "had been on a visit to us since the 24th. He had already spoken to us on the score of his wishes, but we were uncertain, on account of her extreme youth, whether he should speak to her himself or wait till he came back again. However, we felt it was better he should do so; and during our ride up Craig-na-Ban I is afterwards he picked a piece of white heather (the emblem of good luck), which he gave to her; and she replied him to make allusion to his hopes and wishes, which led to this happy conclusion."

"A SPRIG OF WHITE HEATHER:" THE CROWN PRINCE OF PRUSSIA AND THE PRINCESS ROYAL

DRAWN BY W. HATHERELL, R.I

Born 1819 Died 1861

THE PRINCE CONSORT (PRINCE ALBERT OF SAXE-COBURG AND GOTHA)

From the Painting by Francis Holl

as we were talking the Queen came in, also alone, in a simple morning dress. She said she was obliged to leave for Claremont in an hour, and then suddenly interrupting herself, exclaimed, 'But goodness, what a resolution!' for the wind had littered the whole room, and even the pedals of the organ (which, by the way, make a very pretty feature in the room) with leaves of music from a large portfolio which lay open. As she spoke she knelt down and began picking up the music. Prince Albert helped, and I, too, was not idle. Then Prince Albert proceeded to explain the stops to me, and she said she would meanwhile make things straight. I begged that the Prince would first play over something so that as I said I might hear about it in Germany; and he played a Chorale by heart with the pedals, so charmingly and clearly and correctly that it would have done credit to any professional; and the Queen *Antony finished her* wool, came and sat by him and listened, and looked pleased. Then it was my turn, and I began my chorus from St. Paul: 'How lovely are the messengers.' Before I got to the end of the first verse they both joined in the chorus, and all the time Prince Albert managed the stops for me so cleverly—first a flute, at the *forte* the great organ, at the D major part the whole, then he made a lovely *diminuendo* with the stops, and so on to the end of the piece, and all by heart—that I was really quite enchanted.

'Then the young Prince of Gotha came in, and there was more chatting; and the Queen asked if I had written any new songs, and said she was very fond of singing my published ones. 'You should sing one to him,' said Prince Albert; and after a little begging, she said she would try the 'Feldlilien-lied' in B flat, 'as it is still here,' she added; 'for all my music is packed up for Claremont.' Prince Albert went to look for it, but came back, saying it was already packed. . . . . At last the Queen went herself, and while she was gone, Prince Albert said to me, 'She begs you will accept this present as a remembrance;' and gave me a little case with a beautiful ring, on which is engraved 'V.R., 1842.'

'The Queen came back, and said, 'Lady —— is gone, and has taken all my things with her. It really is most annoying.' I then begged that I might not be made to suffer for the accident, and hoped she would sing another song. After some consultation with her husband, he said, 'She will sing you something of Glück's.' Meantime the Princess of Gotha had come in, and we five proceeded through various corridors and rooms to the Queen's sitting-room. The Duchess of Kent came in, too, and while they were all talking I rummaged about among the music and soon discovered my first set of songs. So, of course, I begged her rather to sing one of these than the Glück, to which she very kindly consented; and which first she chose I believe I forget, but it was a very expressive picture. . . . . quite charming, in strict time and tune, and with very good execution. Only in the line, 'Der Prüra Lasten und Muh,' where it goes down to D, and then comes up again chromatically, she sang D sharp each time, and as I gave her the note both times, the last time she sang D, and then it ought to have been D sharp. But, with the exception of this little mistake, it was really charming; and the last long G I have never heard better or purer, or more natural from an amateur. Then I was obliged to confess that Fanny had written the song (which I found very hard—but pride must have a fall), and to beg her to sing one of my own also.' If I would give plenty of help, she would gladly try, she said; and then she sang the Pilgerspruch, 'Lass dich nur,' really quite faultlessly, and with charming feeling and expression. I thought to myself one must not pay too many compliments on such an occasion, so I merely thanked her a great many times; upon which she said, 'Oh! if only I had not been so frightened; generally I have such long breath.' Then I praised her humility, and with the best conscience in the world, for just that part with the long G as she had done as well, taking the three following and connecting notes in the same breath, as one seldom hears it done, and therefore it assumed me doubly that she herself should have begun about it.

'"After this Prince Albert sang the Aennlie-lied, 'Ist ist ein Schnitter!' and then he said I must play him something before I went, and gave me as themes the Chorale which he had played on the organ, and the song he had just sung. If everything had gone on, as usual, I ought to have improvised most dreadfully badly; for it is almost always like that with me when I want to do well, and then I should have gone away vexed with the whole morning. But just as if I was to keep nothing but the pleasantest, most charming recollection of it, I never improvised better; I was in the best of mood for it, and played a long time, and enjoyed it myself; so that besides the two themes, I brought in the songs the Queen had sung naturally enough; and it all went off so easily, that I would gladly not have stopped; and they followed me with such intelligence and attention, that I felt more at my ease than ever I did in improvising to an audience. The Queen said several times she hoped I would soon come to England again and pay them a visit. And then I took leave; and down below I saw the beautiful carriage waiting with their scarlet outriders; and in a quarter of an hour the flag was lowered, and the *Court Circular* announced 'Her Majesty left the Castle at twenty minutes past three.'"

This is a charming vignette of the life, so simple, so natural, so full of good tastes and occupations of the Royal pair. The young Queen, who "put things straight" with her own hands, who was flattered and frightened as she sang to the great composer, yet too sensible and kind to refuse; and who knew so well what she was doing even in her shyness—which has such a charm, in her position—makes a most attractive picture. . . .

The older reader will remember an incident which drew public attention, many years ago, to another Art-pursuit in which Queen Victoria and her husband found a mutual interest—the story of the etchings which have been already referred to, which were one of the amusements of their busy life, and which some busy enterer for the public managed to get clandestine hold of and co-decarvored to reproduce, counting on the interest of the British public in everything that came from the Queen. This unscrupulous attempt revealed to the world at least another pleasant chapter in the Royal life—for the etchings of the Queen and Prince were in great part drawings from their own babies, the Princes and Princesses of to-day. Dear, small children in the nursery, and the delight of their young parents. The fond little portraits, "six months," "at one year," of the little Princess Royal and Prince of Wales: happy memorandums of infancy which, to all parents, are beyond price, were the things which charmed the leisure of the Royal amateurs, and certainly there was no mother in the country, and not many fathers, who did not sympathise in the pursuit. The Prince went further than this. He painted even, in the intervals of more important work, "and began a picture of the Death of Posa, from Schiller's 'Don Carlos,' making first a small sketch for it, which he did beautifully," says the Queen, with fond admiration; and he wrote songs, many of them very sweet and graceful, in which "the Queen constantly helped him in the final arrangement of the music. There was no occupation which gave her greater pleasure." And in those days, joyful days, of which the younger generation scarcely retain any recollection, Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle were full of stately gaiety and sober pomp. Kings and Princes went and came; there were shows and pageants, and bright colours, and happy movement everywhere. State visits, progresses, play-going; the Queen in the foreground of national life, affecting it always for good, and setting an example of purity and virtue. The theatres to which she went, and both which she and her husband enjoyed, were purified by her presence; evils which had been the growth of years disappearing before the fire of the young Queen; and her pure and graceful home, the abode of domestic love and harmony, became a centre of moral influence and every good, cheerful, and pleasant thing. Where there had been jealousies and discords and perpetual strife, were now all the variations of natural piety and tenderness. For the young pair in their happiness neglected no other ties; and the Queen's mother held the honoured place she deserved, close by her child's side, going where she went, and sharing her daily existence, notwithstanding the inevitable separations of life, in a genial independence yet union, such as seems to present the ideal conception of a good mother's life. And children came, making every brightness brighter, binding the Queen to all her generation by those ties of fellow feeling which make human creatures kin, and filling all the Royal dwellings with mirth and innocent youth.

We will leave to another chapter the record of events and of the public business in which both husband and wife worked hard with the steady devotion of duty; but there were serious moments in their joyful life full of that awe and chastened religious feeling which is never more truly respected than in England, and of which the nation will be glad to be reminded. Before they approached the altar, for instance, to take part in the most solemn and sacred of religious ordinances, they were in the habit of withdrawing into solitude and religious thought and communion in a manner very quick the ordinary routine of a Court. On the evening before the solemn festival of Easter next after their marriage the Royal pair remained alone, the Vigil of the Feast, preparing for the sacred celebration, the first time they shared it together. "The Prince," the Queen says, "has a very strong feeling about the solemnity of this day, and did not like to appear in company either on the evening before, or on the day."

PRINCESS ALICE
At the time of her marriage to Prince Louis of Hesse, July 1, 1862

PRINCE LOUIS OF HESSE
At the time of his marriage, July 1, 1862

THE DUCHESS OF EDINBURGH
At the time of her marriage, January 23, 1874

THE DUKE OF EDINBURGH
(Afterwards Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha)
At the time of his marriage, January 23, 1874

Such tenderness of religious feeling must claim all sympathies, whatever differences of opinion may exist. The young couple in their retirement, all disturbing influences of society shut out, reading together about "self knowledge" in that German book of devotion, and soothing their souls with Mozart's glorious music, or another picture of impressive simplicity and guidance, in the midst of all the pomps and pageants which were appropriate, and, indeed, necessary to their lives.

Then following every good thing, came the lines round them and the beautiful slopes and glades of Windsor, which became closely associated with their hands, as the young plants of greater importance which soon began to spring up in their house, the Queen and her husband spent their early lives. She, ever cheerful, humble, simple in the domestic interior, making light of the natural ailments of maternity, he ever watchful, tender, studious of his comfort. No one but her husband, she herself records, ever knew the young mother from her bed or her sofa at those periods of inevitable dependence of the weaker on the stronger. Many, no doubt, are the happy young wives and mothers in England who could say the same, but it is another of those homely natural touches which make the record so pleasant. The pleasures enhanced by the young pair were all domestic, centring in their home; and as the years went on, and the home circle expanded, it became a pleasure to them to find other homes less splendid and less in the public gaze than great Windsor, beautiful and stately as that is. The seaside villa of Osborne and the little Highland Castle at Balmoral became the delightful playthings of their leisure, beloved retreats of family calm, enjoyment, and peace. The Prince had almost a passion for landscape gardening, and great skill and taste in that magnificent yet simple art. The prettiest allusions to the "beloved home," where the Royal household was "wholly given up to the enjoyments of the warm summer weather"—"the children catching butterflies, and Victoria acting under the trees"—abound; and all the improvements made at Balmoral are chronicled by the Queen with the warmest marital pleasure. In later years these two favorite dwellings, which she spoke of to her listener with such special affection as "entirely the creation" of her husband, have been to the Queen more dear than any other habitations, so that there has been a full grudge by times in the popular mind—one of the grudges and weariness of affection—that the chief home of England's Royalty, the cradle of kings, has fallen into less importance than ought to belong to Royal Windsor, the most stately and historic of English houses. But no sentiment could be more touching or more natural.

We will notice only one more point in the private life of the Queen, the most important, the most interesting to a woman, the manner in which she fulfilled that highest natural duty and honourable office of a mother, in which not of ways so many humble women serve their country with a courage and patience beyond praise. "The children" figure perpetually in all the records of the many happy expeditions and a touch of distress in leaving them behind, the Sister ever a touch of nature in the happy interruptions of their appearance, the tedious routine of State processions and receptions a gleam of tender humour as the baby Prince or Princess is taught its baby part, and learns to adore with baby solemnity an admiring people. "Now we are just as many as the days in the week" comes the happy little allusion out of the nursery, breaking delightfully through the ringing of bells and Royal salvo of artillery when another little brother is born. And the education of these happy children was amid all their great occupations the matter most dear to the heart both of the Queen and the Prince. No theory of education can secure perfect results, or each new generation would do, strain as it does perpetually after a more perfect way. But it will interest the reader to know how seriously yet how simply Her Majesty thought of her own duty in this most important respect. "The greatest means of all," she wrote, "is that the children should be brought up as simply and as domestic a way as possible; that (not interfering with their learning) they should be as much as possible with their parents, and learn to place their greatest confidence in them in all things." "It is already a hard case for me," the Queen added, when she spoke of the pressure of public business which prevented her from giving to the little Princess Royal all the attention she wished, "that my occupations prevent me from being with her when she says her prayers;"—and we may quote even the note of instructions in respect to religious training, which the young mother of twenty-five put down for the guidance of her partner in this important work:—

"I am quite clear that she shall be taught to have great reverence for God and for religion, but that she should have the feeling of devotion and love which our Heavenly Father encourages His earthly children to have for Him, and not one of fear and trembling; and that the thoughts of death and an after life should not be presented in an alarming and forbidding view, and that she should be made to know as yet no difference of creeds."

Those wise and simple instructions might be adopted with advantage in many nurseries less than Royal. As a lighter detail we may add the description given by the Welsh nurse of one of the Princes, quoted by Madame Bunsen, who (with a half grudge, perhaps, that she had not something more splendid to tell of) informed the amused Ambassadress that the Royal children "were kept very plain indeed; it was quite poor living; only a bit of roast meat and, perhaps, a plain pudding". The same authority, probably quite unconscious of the high compliment she was paying, pronounced Her Majesty to be "quite fit to have been a poor man's wife as well as Queen." So stands in the world a capable woman, fit for whatever duties God may send, the loudest place in hell of natural dignity as the highest —

Her office there to rear, to train,
Becoming, as is meet and fit,
A link among the days to bind
The generations each to each.

PUBLIC LIFE.

THE private life of the Queen was throughout so sympathetic, and has so fully embodied all that is most congenial to the English mind in the way of domestic virtue and kindness, that Her Majesty's biographer—both now and in future—will seem to be tempted to forget the grander side of that existence which in its gentler details had so much that charms the mind and attracts the interest. On the high level of a throne also the bigger national events that are the common routine, while the graceful circumstances of individual existence are rarely known. We must not forget, however, that the account we are now giving is not that only of a model woman, passing with mingled purity and dignity through all the vicissitudes of human life, loving, wedding, bearing children, making the most illustrious house in England an ideal home, and diffusing throughout the highest rank of society an atmosphere of moral purity and lofty meaning, but of the same time of one who was the first officer of the State, the first servant, as well as the Sovereign of England, and whose life was throughout one of conscientious duty in her public capacity. There is something curious and piquant in the aspect which public affairs receive as they appear in those portions of the Queen's Journal which have been given to the public, and in her familiar letters, all so womanly and simple in their tone, and expressing her sentiments with so much natural and spontaneous feeling. The time has passed when private letters conveyed public news, so that correspondence, even at a time when this was more the custom than now, the public news was, save when mixed with gossip, always so distinct from the common and dearer life recorded as to make it evident how different was the place it held in the writer's thoughts. But the Queen's letters so clearly show these big concerns to have been her daily business, perpetually close and present, that seen thus, through her eyes, they "suffer a sea-change," and even across the years we become more familiarly conscious of them than when they were transacted over our head, while we looked on in the calm of distance. Few public questions, for example, have attracted more general interest, and even excitement, than that so called Eastern Question, which more than once has come to another exciting crisis since Queen Victoria was first called upon to consider it. But we are conscious that our personal interest in it is of a very different character from that which made the Queen say, in 1854, "I think our child ought to have besides the name, some thing of Turkey, Egypto, as we think of nothing else." The great events which affected, or might affect, the nation, to us interesting, yet far off, were to her her profession, her life, holding the place which our lonely affairs or our special business do to us. This is a specially Royal peculiarity which is highly interesting to the student of human nature. In something of the same way it is curious and interesting to the reader (especially to the young reader) to see how books are treated by their makers, the people whose trade and occupation it is to produce those great strains of poetry which move generations, and outlive for centuries the small existence of the poet. Politics are the occupation and profession of the Royal worker as literature is of the writer—the greatest trade of all, and the most exciting; and the record of Queen Victoria's life was one of Work, diligent and unceasing, measured day by day, like that of man

Who lands the cloud,
Or builds the house, or sows the grass.

Details of this serious and steady work abound in all the records. At one public crisis in the troubled year 1848 we are told that 28,000 despatches were received at the Foreign Office alone, all of which passed through the Queen's hands. The most trending case of weighty papers of this kind gave an amount of occupation which it is difficult to over-estimate; and when we consider that this was but one of many branches of public affairs, some idea may be formed of

THE MARRIAGE OF THE PRINCE OF WALES AND PRINCESS ALEXANDRA OF DENMARK AT ST. GEORGE'S CHAPEL, WINDSOR, MARCH 10, 1863

FROM THE PICTURE BY C. H. TOMSON, IN WINDSOR CASTLE

PRINCE CHRISTIAN
At the time of his marriage, July 5, 1866

PRINCESS HELENA
At the time of her marriage to Prince Christian, July 5, 1866

the business at which day by day the Queen and her husband worked together with unswerving devotion, he acting but as only so close a companion, being at the same time a man of high abilities and judgment, could. "But yet, though the Prince advised, supported, and backed up the Queen in every way, he could not be her minister. He could make the suit, as Hale suggested to a young woman, sweet, but he could not take it from her. And, indeed, the sure effort at first of securing her right to his constant co-operation, and establishing his right to be consulted in every thing, and to share with her the secrets of statesmanship, gave Her Majesty a rest she must. It will have been observed, in the idyllic record of the life of the young pair which has been given in the preceding chapter, that the forenoon was given up to business, and that the Prime Minister was with the Queen almost every afternoon; besides which she was subject to be called upon at any moment in every political crisis, or when the world was troubled either at home or abroad. The difficulty which has been referred to, and in respect to which the Queen said playfully that her little should have the names of Turko-Egypto, was one of the first which occurred in her married life. It was a branch of the same question which is still agitating the world, yet bore a very different aspect. It was France then which was suspected of evil intentions against Turkey and our road to India. Mehemet Ali, the ruler of Egypt, had rebelled against his suzerain, the Sultan, and France had taken in hand to back him up and sustain his claims, with the intention, as avowed in the French Chamber of the time, of securing a serviceable ally in the Mediterranean, whose fleet, combined with that of the French, would balance and do away with the supremacy of England upon the seas. Our way to India then was more dangerous and lengthened; there was no such convenience as the Suez Canal to encourage, and even the Overland Route was but coming into use; still, however, the contention was dangerous, and the English Ministry had to declare that France could not be permitted to be masters, "directly or indirectly, of the road to our Indian dominions." France, then, as other Powers have done since, aimed at nothing less than a Protectorate of the Turkish Empire. How strange are the revolutions of this whirligig of Time! The danger was averted by the interposition of the four great Powers, Russia, Prussia, Austria, and England, who established themselves by Treaty as a joint Protectorate of the Turks, and foiled France in her deep-laid schemes. So greatly does the aspect of the world and combinations resemble us it changes in such a space as half a century. The offence of France at being thus baffled was so great that she declared herself insulted, and the peace between England and her nearest neighbour was for a time in some jeopardy.

In these days, too, there were troubles within as well as without, such as occur periodically in the history of every nation. Deficiencies in the national revenue, paralysed trade, suffering among the people, political agitation amounting to sedition, even found at the beginning of Her Majesty's reign; and all this joined to troubles abroad, in China, in the West Indies, and, most serious of all, in Afghanistan, where the English troops had fallen into a trap, and the English envoy had been murdered at Cabul—made the skies lowering and gloomy on every side. All these things, as we have said, affect us on the lower and more tranquil level of the national life comparatively little. We are sorry and indignant, and perhaps anxious, if our own interests are threatened, and grumble at the increased price in the pound of a war-tax or poor-rate; but these national calamities were as intolerable calamities to the Queen, matters brought daily and hourly within her notice, and of which every fluctuating scrap of news, every breath of rumour, came straight to her ear. A change of Ministry, then imminent, was also a matter of very much closer interest to her than, whatever the warmth of political feeling, it can ever be to the spectators of the great national drama. To the Queen it was a very serious matter when for the first time in her reign the Whigs went out and the Tories came in. It implied the loss from her side of her first political counsellor and guide, Lord Melbourne, who had led her first faltering steps into the ways of Royalty, and had been to her the most fatherly of friends. The Queen had been brought up in the traditions of the Whig party, and had warmly disliked the Tories, who, on their part, with no personal ill-feeling, but with the instinct of party opposition, had done much to give proclamation to this feeling by their furious interference in the matter of Prince Albert's allowances, and other arrangements of the same kind. The extremely natural but imperious girlish demonstration of feeling which had prolonged the reign of Lord Melbourne and Whiggism, on an occasion already referred to, by the young Queen's refusal to part with her favourite ladies, had given very marked proof of this. But growing wisdom and more prudent counsels now shut out all petulance from Her Majesty's actions, and made her accept the political will then, as she ever did after, with constitutional impartiality. "Yet it is sufficiently well known that repeatedly, afterwards, Her Majesty lost no receive in the position of Prime Minister—one which involves a very large amount of personal annoyance, and in which an unsympathetic mind must be a daily and hourly vexation—men who were not agreeable to her, either in person or principles. But we believe we are saying no more than the world knows, when we add, that she never let either prejudice or repugnance stand in the way of her Imperial duty, and usually ended by finding a staunch friend and supporter in the political leader whom she accepted loyally at the hands of the people, while herself indifferent or undisposed towards him. This is not a thing which we are at all likely to take into account in estimating the difficulties of the Royal position, yet nothing could be more real, or require a greater strain of self-control. The Queen, however, proved equal, with her husband's sustaining help, to the ordeal, and soon learned the lesson which experience can best teach, that political differences are of much less importance than appear, and that the national prosperity and happiness were as much the first and greatest objects with the Tory Minister as with the Whig, and as nobly pursued. It was fortunate for the young Queen that her affections in particular, and her high, self-sustaining devotion of Lord Melbourne was to the noble spirit, more "finely touched" to all "fine issues," of such a man as Sir Robert Peel. It was of the first use of the new Ministry, which was the establishment of an Income-Tax, by which to set right the deficient balance in the revenue, that Her Majesty took one of the few independent steps which are possible to constitutional sovereigns. Although exempted, by right of her position as Head of the State, from any share in the taxes, she voluntarily put aside this exemption in such a moment of difficulty, and claimed the right as an Englishwoman to contribute her quota to this important branch of "the Queen's taxes"—an act as wise as it was gracious.

Although constitutional before everything, Her Majesty had quick sympathies and generous impulses, and there are many pretty little stories extant of her anxiety to be merciful when justice did not sternly demand strong measures. The late Mr. Robert Wilson, in his history of the Queen's reign, published by Messrs. Cassell, relates that once when the Duke of Wellington brought her a soldier's death-warrant to sign, she asked him, with tears in her eyes, if there was nothing to be said on behalf of the man. The Duke explained that he was an incorrigible deserter, but after being pressed by Her Majesty, admitted that the culprit's comrades spoke well of him in other respects. Her Majesty replied, eagerly, "Oh, your Grace, I am so glad to hear that," and, with trembling hand, rapidly scribbled the word "Pardoned" across the fatal scroll, and signed her name with a sigh of relief and a smile of satisfaction. While all these labours were going on, and the young lady on the throne going through an amount of business daily which only those acquainted with the manifold anxieties of official life could fully estimate, she was at the same time subject to dangers which are unknown in private life, and which even the highest officials are rarely exposed to. Three times in the two years after her marriage this young, innocent, and virtuous woman, so attractive to all who surrounded her, so free of all personal crimes or disadvantages, so popular and beloved as she was, was shot at in the peaceful streets of her own cheerful and unsuspicious London. That the offenders were contemptible in the highest degree did not make the danger or the outrage less, for a bullet from the hand of a fool may do damage which all the wisdom of the wise could not undo; and the shock not only of alarm but of discouragement likely to be produced upon a sensitive young mind by such incidents was naturally very great. The first of these attempts took place in June, 1840, only a few months after the Queen's marriage, when a man named Edward Oxford fired at the Queen when she was driving down Constitution Hill for her daily airing. The royal couple were in a small phaeton, going to pay their dutiful visit to the Duchess of Kent, in all the simplicity and confidence of their nature, Prince Albert driving his wife through the peaceful streets of the summer evening. "We had hardly proceeded a hundred yards from the Palace when I noticed," Prince Albert writes, "on the footpath on my side a little more looking man, holding something towards us; and before I could distinguish what it was, a shot was fired which almost stunned us both, it was so loud, and fired barely six paces from us. Victoria had just turned to the left to look at a house, and could not understand why her ears were ringing, as, from its being on very near, she could hardly distinguish that it proceeded from a shot having been fired. The horses started and the carriage stopped. I seized Victoria's hands and asked if the fright had not shaken her, but she laughed at the thing. I then looked again at the man, who was still standing in the same place, his arms crossed, and a pistol in each hand. His attitude was so theatrical and affected, it quite amused me. Suddenly he again pointed his pistol and fired a second time. This time Victoria also saw the shot, and stooped quickly, drawn down by me. The ball must have passed just above her head."

This was not a pleasant feature in an afternoon drive. The Queen, however, continued her course undaunted, with the cheerful and simple courage natural to her, and went on to her mother to carry the first news of the outrage, and set all misery at rest as to its effect. Afterwards "we took a short drive through the Park, partly to give Victoria a little air, partly also to show the people we had not lost confidence in them." The Queen at the time was in a state of health such as is often affected unseemly by a very much smaller matter, but her sound nerves and high spirits defended her better than armour of mail. The wretched culprit was a dissipated lad of seventeen, apparently moved by nothing more serious than depraved vanity and desire to be notorious. It is not even certain whether there was a bullet in the pistol he fired, and the convenient plea of insanity was brought in to save England from the burden of executing such a being for high treason. Some time after, during the sitting of the Commission on Lunatic Asylums, it was maintained that this pitiful criminal was still vegetating among the madmen, more respectable in their real misery than he—but not because—"as sane as any of us," the doctor said who spoke of him. A life's imprisonment is perhaps on the whole, even to the meanest spirit, as hard a punishment as our swift hanging once for all.

Two years later, at very nearly the same hour, and on the same

PRINCESS LOUISE
At the time of her marriage to the Marquis of Lorne, March 21, 1871

THE MARQUIS OF LORNE
(Afterwards Duke of Argyll)
At the time of his marriage, March 21, 1871

THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT
At the time of his marriage, March 13, 1879

THE DUCHESS OF CONNAUGHT
At the time of her marriage, March 13, 1879

THE DUKE OF ALBANY
At the time of his marriage, April 27, 1882

THE DUCHESS OF ALBANY
At the time of her marriage, April 27, 1882

PRINCE HENRY OF BATTENBERG
At the time of his marriage to Princess Beatrice, July 23, 1885

PRINCESS BEATRICE
At the time of her marriage, July 23, 1885

time of the year, a still more exciting incident of the same kind occurred. Prince Albert saw, in the middle of the day on Sunday, on the return from church, "a man step out from the crowd and present a pistol full. He was some two paces from us. I heard the trigger snap, but it must have missed fire. I turned to Victoria, who was seated on my right, and asked, 'Did you hear that?' She had been bowing to the people on the right, and had heard nothing. I said, 'I may be mistaken, but I am sure I saw some one take aim at us.'" Nothing was said publicly, however, on the subject. No one among the Queen's immediate attendants had observed it, and the Prince, although he informed the police and the Minister, was half disposed to believe that he had himself been deceived. However, during the Sunday afternoon several corroborations turned up. A boy who was among the crowd had seen the incident, and had seen and spoken to a third spectator, who also perceived it. This was enough to set the police and authorities in activity, and the vague danger thus known to exist conveyed a certain excitement into the Palace. "We were naturally much agitated. Victoria very nervous and unwell," says Prince Albert. Notwithstanding, the Queen went out to her daily drive as usual, though such precautions as could be taken were adopted. "You may imagine," continues the narrative, "that our minds were not very easy. We looked behind every tree, and I cast my eyes round to search of the rascal's face. On our way home, as we were approaching the Palace, between the Green Park and the garden wall, a shot was fired at us about five paces off. It was the fellow with the same pistol—a little, swarthy, ill-looking rascal. We felt as if a load had been taken off our hearts, and we thanked the Almighty for having preserved us for a second time from so great a danger." "Her Majesty told me she had expected it," and it was a relief to her to have it over," says another witness. "She says she could never have existed under the uncertainty of a concealed attack. She would much rather run the risk at once than have the presentiment of danger constantly hovering over her." The assailant on this occasion was another wretched creature called Francis, equally without any motive or inducement which could account for such a piece of cruel and cowardly folly. A month afterwards, just after the trial of Francis, a third incident of the same kind occurred, a deformed man called Bean being the culprit. The cumulation in itself must have had a very painful effect on the Queen's mind, since nothing worse could have occurred to the most hated despot than these repeated shootings which threatened the most popular and beloved of Queens. The first of the three gave his interpretation of it afterwards with great shrewdness. "If I had been hanged," said Oxford, "there would have been no more shooting at the Queen." The original criminal evidently despised his imitators. "I was not at all frightened," the Queen wrote to her uncle, "and feel very proud at dear Uncle Mensdorff calling me *ein wackre* (very courageous), which I shall ever remember with peculiar pride, coming from so distinguished an officer as he is." Thus the Queen gave proof of her valour under fire—not the less as ordeal that her enemies were so contemptible, and all the greater as without excitement or encouragement, a danger encountered not in passion, but in cold blood. The young lady's Royal calm is charmingly contrasted with the emotion of her Minister, Sir Robert Peel—not generally a demonstrative man—who, on seeing her for the first time after this third attempt, could not restrain his feelings, but burst into tears—tears as honourable to him as her steady nerves and bravery were to the young Sovereign—only twenty-three, with all the susceptibilities of a young mother, and all the happiness of a most happy wife, endearing her existence to her.

Shortly after this period the deplorable complication of affairs in India came to an end. Cabul was taken, the British captives delivered, and British honour vindicated. As soon as the news was brought to the Queen, she and her husband immediately set about devising honours for the troops to whom this re-establishment of credit and safety was due. This was a grateful and in every sense a public duty. And so were the State visits which she began in the following year by an expedition to France to make acquaintance with the Royal family there, with whom Her Majesty had, however, communicated through her uncle of Belgium, and her cousins of the House of Coburg. The visits of Kings and Queens to each other have become common enough and familiar to us nowadays, but they were then much more rare and unusual; and there was some excitement in the expedition which took a Queen of England to the shores of France, where her predecessors had gone as conquerors, there to be welcomed with enthusiasm as a friend by the people with whom, both before and after, the idea of a hostile invasion of perfidious Albion had been, and was to be, popular enough. The Queen was too sensible and too courageous to indulge any flutters of doubt on the subject, and the whole excursion was managed with the greatest success, and afforded the most thorough gratification to all concerned. The Queen herself gives us the first volume of the "Life of the Prince Consort" an account of this visit, which is full of character and animation. King Louis Philippe and his family appear there in their most amiable and charming aspects; but indications are not wanting that the Queen's shrewdness had perceived something of the elusive over-amiable humbug that was in that Pecksniff of monarchs. The saintly goodness of his Queen, and the admirable character of several of his sons and daughters were, however, above all doubt, and it is evident that Her Majesty found herself with a surprised delight in the bosom of a family of her equals—the guest of a reigning House as princely as her own, and of a nation which had trodden step by step (though far from amicably) with England in the way of civilisation and social progress. Nothing could be more charming than the simple and frank narrative. "The effect which the excursion has produced is excellent," Prince Albert wrote to his correspondents in Germany. "The French were flattered and gratified . . . and the public here are thoroughly satisfied with the excursion. Six newspaper reporters were in Eu, who reported everything in the minutest detail. Lord Brougham wrote to me yesterday to congratulate Victoria and myself on the admirable effect produced by the late excursion to France, and on the sure tendency of this wise measure to create the best feelings between the two nations." This was the first

BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

of a series of visits to and from England which mingled in the happiest way the cordiality of private intercourse with important national events. "Little passed of a political nature," the Prince adds, "except the declaration of Louis Philippe to Aberdeen that he will not give his son to Spain, even if he were asked; and Aberdeen's answer that, excepting one of his sons, any aspirant whom Spain might choose would be acceptable to England." The pledge, very soon to be broken, led to a personal remonstrance on the part of the Queen of the most spirited and admirable kind to which we will come further on.

A visit from the Emperor of Russia (Nicholas) was the next incident of this kind, and had a still more distinct political character. Already there was talk of Turkey falling into pieces, and the great potentate of the North felt it necessary to make protestations on the subject. "I do not want," he said, "one inch of Turkish soil for myself, but neither will I allow anybody else to have one." This was evidently an allusion to the French interposition in favour of Mehemet Ali, and some idea of detaching England from France seemed to be among the objects of the visitor. In the present state of affairs it may be interesting to quote one or two of Her Majesty's clear-sighted observations upon this special visitor, though it is difficult without quoting the letters entire to give any idea of the admirable and animated picture of the stranger which is conveyed by the details she gives, always with the complete simplicity and absence of any strain which distinguishes her. "He is very much alarmed about the East and about Austria," says the Queen. "He is, I should say, too frank, for he talks so openly before people, which he should not do, and with difficulty restrains himself. His anxiety to be believed is very great, and I must say his personal promises I am inclined to believe." The events which proved this confidence to be ill-founded were unfortunately soon to come.

The country, however, with which at this period our alliance was most doubtful was France, with whom another difficulty arose on a question about Tahiti, long ago passed from the public recollection. France had assumed a protectorate over the South Sea Islands which led to some altogether trifling but irritating quarrels. "The only thing almost to mar our happiness is the heavy and threatening cloud which hangs over our relations with France, and which distresses and alarms us sadly." Her Majesty wrote in 1844, "the whole nation here are very angry." The danger blew over, however, and Louis Philippe paid a return visit to the Queen, which excited a great deal of interest in England. "At two o'clock he arrived, this cautious King; worth seeing if ever a body was," writes Lady Lyttelton. "The Queen having graciously permitted me to be present, I joined the Court in the corridor, and we waited an hour, and then the Queen of England came out of her room to go and receive the King of France the first time in history. . . . From the Armoury, amidst all the old trophies and knights' armour, and Nelson's bust, and Marlborough's flag, and Wellington's flag, we saw the first of the escort enter the quadrangle, and down flew the Queen, and we after her, to the outside of the door on the pavement of the quadrangle." The Armoury here described is ornamented with a small French flag on each side, renewed every year, the presentation of which forms the feudal quitrent paid by the Dukes of Marlborough and Wellington for Blenheim and Strathfieldsaye. These are objects which would not, we presume, be specially called to the French King's notice, emblems of victory as they were. The corridor above mentioned runs round three sides of the quadrangle, and is one of the most striking features in the modern part of Windsor Castle. The French King's visit was very successful and agreeable. He was admired by the multitude as a king who had once worked for his living and blacked his own boots could scarcely fail to be; and he went with great interest to all the places he had known in his previous visit to England in his lawless, and—altogether unwitting what was before him—to Claremont, where, though he did not know it, his life was to end—but not without his own fault. Events, however, were going on at home of still more importance and interest than these Royal visits, and the passing agitation of national unsettledness now and then, and vague threats of international disturbances, which happily came to nothing. One remarkable, we believe unparalleled, feature in the Royal receptions just described is, however, worth noticing in any biographical sketch of the Queen—a fact which was stated by the Prime Minister in his place in Parliament to the honour of Her Majesty and her wise and noble husband. "Two of the most powerful Sovereigns in the habitable globe," Sir Robert Peel said, had paid visits of State to England, but not one farthing had been asked from England for the expenses of their entertainment. "Those visits of necessity created a considerable increase of expenditure; but, through that wise system of economy which is the only source of true magnificence, Her Majesty was enabled to meet every charge, and to give a reception to these Sovereigns which struck every one by its magnificence without adding one tittle to the burdens of the country. I am not required," the Minister added, "to press for the extra expenditure of one shilling on account of these unforeseen causes of increased expenditure. I think that to state this is only due to the personal credit of Her Majesty, who insists upon it that there shall be every magnificence required by her station, but without incurring a single debt."

THE RECUMBENT FIGURE OF THE PRINCE CONSORT ON THE CENOTAPH IN THE ALBERT MEMORIAL CHAPEL, WINDSOR

This was a wonderful contrast to the habits of the last generation of Royalty, which was never out of debt, and constantly making claims with no particular reason, upon the liberality of the nation. Stormy times were coming, however, in politics, and in the internal history of the nation. The discussion upon the Corn Laws sent the country wild, and filled England with hot controversy; and this was pushed to a decision by the horrible stimulus of the Irish famine. The wise and able statesman at the head of affairs felt himself bound, at the expense of any prejudices and preferences of his own, and of many important loans to his Government, to adopt Free Trade principles, and to abolish the Corn Laws and the principle of Protection. Throughout this long and serious conflict the Queen kept her constitutional place in a way which all acknowledged. She had been very reluctant to replace the Whigs, who were the friends of her youth, by a Conservative Ministry, but having got over that early difficulty Her Majesty's excellent sense and sympathetic heart had soon learned to do justice to the patriotism and fine character of Sir Robert Peel. We may instance an incident most graceful on the part of the Queen, most creditable to both parties, which occurred at one of the earliest points of the great Minister's career. Anxious to show him some special honour, it occurred to Her Majesty to offer the much-indebted Premier that his of ribbon which makes the highest honour bear, and which is, perhaps, the most highly prized honour which an English Sovereign can bestow. The Queen proposed, with the most delicate and generous feeling, to give Sir Robert the Order of the Garter. In the same generous high-mindedness the Minister declined this highest of social distinctions. "He sprang from the people," he is reported to have said, "and was essentially of the people. His heart was not set upon titles of honour." Nothing could be more honourable to both sides than such a negotiation. No knight of the highest Order on earth ever served his country with more honour and devotion, and no Sovereign was ever more imperial yet more cordial in reception of men which was above all vulgar material recompense.

The next public event which called for the Queen's personal interposition was the affair so fatal to France, or at least to the existence and character of the Orleans family in France, the melancholy transaction known as "the Spanish Marriage." Queen Isabella of Spain, and her sister the Infanta, had reached an age at which, though girls of other ranks are still in the schoolroom, Queens and Princesses are sometimes called upon to marry; and Europe was concerned to find fit husbands for these two unfortunate though highly placed ladies. There were many candidates, among whom the Duke of Montpensier, a son of Louis Philippe, had been mentioned for the younger sister. The King, however, had declared himself in the most distinct manner on this point, pledging himself, indeed, to permit no such match, at least until after the

THE CENOTAPH OF THE PRINCE CONSORT IN THE ALBERT MEMORIAL CHAPEL, WINDSOR

PRINCE CONSORT'S MAUSOLEUM AT FROGMORE

satisfactory marriage of the Queen of Spain and birth of an heir to the throne. The boat is well known. Instead of keeping her position the too skilful head of the Orleans family, aided by the generally virtuous and conscientious Guizot, by some curious moral aberration which it is difficult to understand, pitched up a most unsuitable and inappropriate marriage for the young Queen, and married the Infanta to the Duke of Montpensier, thus placing a son of France next in succession to the throne of Spain. With the curious diplomacy which is sometimes used in families, but seldom in the larger world, the hand of the old Queen, whose reputation and name enforced respect everywhere, was employed to make this arrangement known to Queen Victoria and her Ministers, and on receipt of the significant and acknowledgment of this momentous news, Louis Philippe made another good and gentle woman, Queen Louise of Belgium, the wife of King Leopold, the medium of his explanations, professing to be extremely distressed by the misunderstanding, "more being pettie Reine," who, he says, "was only though the spectacles of Lord Palmerston," and giving a most plausible and prolonged explanation of his motives and actions. We wholly refer to recount him. The state of affairs on the Continent in the terrible crisis of 1848 was at once the cause of the deepest concern and alarm, and of the most lofty confidence in the English Queen: the alarm was for others, for friends, relatives, members of the little band of Royal personages between whom a certain community of feeling must always exist—but of absolute confidence for herself and her own immediate family. To see the members of the House of Orleans, so lately her happy and splendid hosts, "coming to us one by one, like people shipwrecked," "France in flames, Belgium menaced," and the Revolution spreading everywhere, was no small trial. Everywhere almost where the eyes could be turned some friend was threatened, some throne tottering, and it was impossible to tell how far the contagion of war and revolt might spread. The Queen speaks of "this terrible anxiety" with a thrill of genuine feeling. "We have had since the 25th (of February) enough for a whole life—misery, sorrow, excitement—in short, I feel as if we had jumped over thirty years' experience at once. The whole face of Europe is changed, and I feel as if I lived in a dream." *Great events make me calm.* It is only trifles that irritate my nerves."

It is not to be supposed, however, that the Queen's sympathies, warm as they were, were carried into injudicious partisanship. Before it was known what the fate of the old King and Queen of France was, when they were still wandering, and uncertain, as well as sympathy, deeply excited in respect to them, the Queen made a very distinct separation between personal sympathy and political support. We do everything we can for the poor family, who are, indeed, sorely to be pitied," she wrote to King Leopold as early as March 1st. "But you will naturally understand that we cannot make *cause commune* with them, and cannot take a hostile position to the new state of affairs in France. We leave them alone, but if a Government which has the approbation of the country be formed, we shall feel it necessary to recognise it in order to join them down to maintain peace and the existing treaties, which is of the greatest importance. It will not be pleasant to do this, but the public good and the peace of Europe go before one's personal feelings."

The crisis of possible revolution through which England too

A COTTAGE BEDSIDE AT OSBORNE

FROM THE PICTURE BY GOUDAY STERLE, R.S.A.

are sorry that space prevents us from quoting at length the letter in which Queen Victoria replied. The "good little Queen," whom the experienced Royal doctor had thought it so easy to overcome with a display of sparsens arguments, showed herself as superior to his plausible reasonings as to his disingenuous arts; and there can be no doubt as to which Sovereign came best, even intellectually, out of the encounter. The disinterested desire of England for the best issue possible in view of Spanish interests, and the truly plausibility of the French King, both in excusing himself, and doubly accusing himself in so doing, come out most distinctly in this remarkable correspondence, which the reader will find in its original form in an appendix to the first volume of Sir Theodore Martin's "Life of the Prince Consort," and which is well worth his attention.

Two years later, the Royal exulant, who had used all his powers to make the worst appear the better cause, and who had been so signally defeated in the effort by the "good little Queen," whose reason never yielded though her heart was always soft to the family she loved—was a fugitive seeking hospitality and shelter from the young girl whom he had vainly tried to beguile, but who were

Even the breach between herself and the family of Louis Philippe, which had severed them for a time, made her reception of them more tender now, and her sympathy more profound. "How little did I dream that this would be the way we should meet again," she says. The wretchedness of the exiles came still more clearly home to the safe and happy Royal House in England when Germany took fire, and "our little Coburg" were, unprotected by its chastery, shared the general fury. "How can one be happy when he sees and hears of such misery all round?" the Queen asks. "The poor Hohenlohes and Charles Leiningen (the Queen's sister and brother) have suffered much. And then those poor exiles at Clarendon! Their life, their future, break one's heart to think of." While thus moved by sorrow for others, the Queen was herself passing through one of those crises in a woman's life when emotion of every kind is most deeply felt. The Princess Louise was born in March, in the midst of all these troubles. But nothing shook the courage and calmness of the young mother. "From the first, Her Majesty says, "I heard all that passed, and my only thought and talk was politics. But I never was calmer and quieter or less nervous."

passed was brief and trifling enough, but what with the contagion of terror on the Continent, and the alarming numbers of the Chartist demonstration which was understood to be preparing, the peaceable inhabitants in London suffered a fright. The story has been often told, and quite lately has been given at length, both from the Royal side, on the part of the Prince Consort, and from the other side of the question—from the lips of spectators again loyal, yet warmly sympathetic with the incipient revolutionaries, in the "Memorials of Charles Kingsley." On the 10th of April in this eventful year the Chartists assembled on Kennington Common, with the intention, publicly announced, of marching *en masse* to the House of Commons, all across London, and there presenting their petition that the Charter might be made the law of the land. The numbers to be called together were estimated at 150,000, and, naturally, the possible invasion of such a multitude into the richest of cities was very alarming to the peaceful inhabitants who had just been spectators of the wild work on the other side of the Channel. The excitement with which Mr. Kingsley, believing earnestly in the sincerity of the movement, rushed up to town to

THE QUEEN AND THE PRINCESS LOUISE

A SKETCH IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS AT THE OPENING OF PARLIAMENT, 1871

persuade and exhort and entreat these possible rebels, is sufficient proof of the impression made upon the general mind. And the Government felt itself called upon to take the utmost precautions. As many as 150,000 special constables were sworn in—several volunteers from all classes of society—a very sufficient evidence of the shadowed of the national feeling. Besides, it was known that all the public buildings were occupied by troops and artillery ready to interpose if they were needed. "But not a soldier nor a piece of artillery shall you see unless in actual need," said the Duke of Wellington. They were never called upon. The meeting at Kennington Common was another 150,000, as the procession was in three hours, not 500,000, as its leaders promised it should be, but less than a sixth part of the smallest number. The petition found its way to the House of Commons in the ordinary way, supported by no monster procession. The troops moved away almost as they had come, nobody being the wiser, and the only people "put out" were the special constables, whom Punch clothed with admiring pikes, and the country, after its wont, half laughed at, half upgraded. They were the chief joke in the performance just then it likely had almost now to hear that other people were even more an extra at that time, and that the young Mr. Kingsley, from his Rectory, could not be happy without painting placards and collecting moneys to bring back those rampant reformers to the right way. The whole affair was a triumph, as Punch put it, for Sir Robert Peel and "the well-timed appropriations." We had no revolution positively, and it ended in smoke," Prince Albert wrote. A most watchful colonist to the universal Continental commotion could not have been.

This danger, however, so happily surmounted, was not the worst or even the most real of the difficulties which threatened the country. Shortly after the agitations of the abortive revolution were over the Prince went to Germany that "confidence as at a distance" and the prospects of the future were again gloomy. "I believe me I am often very ill," the Queen wrote. There were real evils enough abroad, if not on the way of politics, one to foment the factious party kept the country agitated and exhausted as it was by the famine stalk of the Famine, in a perpetual commotion. This, however, was partially brought to a conclusion by the zeal and sagacity of Sheridan and Maugher, and in the year 1849 Ireland was so far tranquillised that it was possible for the Queen to try the pacific experiment of a visit there, which she had long wished to make. To quote the unprompted country the expense of a State visit, the expedition was made to bear the air of "a yachting excursion," and the Queen, though it is apparent from her Journal that the trip was not a thing of pleasure to her, made the voyage to Cork, and entered Ireland at that point. Nothing could have been more triumphant than the success of this visit, at which many loyal hearts trembled; but the Irish, with their fine sense of hospitality, and that imaginative perception of which Celtic races have the privilege, were the last people in the world to spoil the delight of such a visit by any reminiscences of sedition, and the impression made upon the country on one side, and the Royal travellers on the other, was all that could be desired. No portion of the Queen's dominions showed itself more loyal or more enthusiastic than that Ireland when the Sovereign united herself willing to shores. And the confidence given was not a grudging one, for the Queen was not alone, but accompanied by all her children who were old enough for such a voyage. Her Majesty paid a second visit to Ireland in 1861. It seems a thing to be regretted that an experiment so highly successful should not have been tried again sooner, for no further visit was made till the recent one in 1900. Her Majesty was by that time on the very edge of the sorrow which rent her life in twain, and had no longer the courage to undertake great expeditions. The Queen by that time had acquired her home in the Highlands, which is referred to in a former chapter, and which established a still closer connection between her and Scotland; but as this was a connection never threatened by any sedulous agitation, or in which any thrill of excitement or alarm was possible, there is less need to dwell upon it. There has been no fluctuation in the loyalty of Scotland throughout all the Queen's career.

It was shortly after this period that the first idea of the Great Exhibition entered the Prince's mind, an idea which so greatly excited the country, and it may be said, the world, and in which the Queen shared fully with her husband, as she did in every conception of his fertile and active mind. It has been often and erroneously said that the idea of the Exhibition was something like a flourish of trumpets to the face of Europe, a boast and bravado of the scorn of the world against all those demons of war which had been so long chained and silent. But there had been agitation in all the monument around and about the enormous enough even in England, to make the way much less plausible than it appears on the outside. Not very long before our own horizon had been troubled by a cloud on account of some trifling and altogether insignificant difficulties with Greece, caused by the claims made by a Jewish subject and Portuguese, by compensation of some houses they had suffered—too trifling to be worth entering upon now—but which caused a very great commotion at the time. Gazzer appealing to France and Russia for protection against the earliest pressure put upon her by England for the satisfaction of these private and very extraordinary demands. This arbitrary and unnecessary exercise of British power brought the Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, into general disfavour for the moment. No one has ever lived who has called forth warmer expressions of public feeling. He was long the most popular of Ministers at home, but he was the most unpopular at Ministers abroad, and regarded by his Continental contemporaries with almost universal hatred, not unmingled by fear—a state of feeling not always despicable to the nation whose representative produced so enormous an impression upon the mind of the world. To the Queen, however,

A DRAWING ROOM AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE IN 1870

SKETCH ON THE ROYAL DAIS

THE OPENING OF THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL

untiringly impartial as she had been for years, and holding the balance of her constitutional duties with the steadiest hand, the proceedings of this brilliant and exciting Minister were always trying, and often directly offensive. In foreign affairs the individual position of a Sovereign is much more likely to be affected unfavourably by want of wisdom and courtesy, even in the forms of procedure employed, than it can be at home. The Queen had shown herself nobly impartial in all the commotions of the Continent—never attempting to use her great power and prestige in favour of her Royal friends, much as she promptly felt for them in their troubles, but forestalling all open and diplomatic opinion by at once announcing as has been seen, the necessity for accepting the decisions of other nations in their own affairs; but it was her constitutional right to be consulted, to know everything that was being done, and thus to keep in harmony with the proceedings which were taken in her name. Lord Palmerston, however, used as he was to carrying things with a high hand, and as lusty as he was brilliant, transgressed the accustomed usage in many points, giving grave offence to Her Majesty. At we have called attention to her strict observance of her constitutional position, and absolute impartiality. Such in respect to parties at home and complications abroad, it is necessary to the full understanding of the Queen's character to notice here that this cause from no mere complaisance of temper, but that when her own rights were assailed she knew how to defend them with spirit and dignity. After various attempts to set matters right in a quieter way, Her Majesty was at last moved to enroll Lord Palmerston formally and distinctly to a sense of what was due to her. The letter which she wrote on this subject has been spoken of in the "Life of Lord Palmerston" as "a paper written in anger by a lady as well as a Sovereign," but we think the impartial reader will feel it to be a very dignified statement of what Her Majesty had a right to expect, and, indeed, to exact. The brief stipulations of this letter are as modest as they are dignified. The Queen wrote as follows:—

"With reference to the conversation about Lord Palmerston which the Queen had with Lord John Russell the other day . . . she thinks it right, in order to prevent any mistake in future, to explain what it is she expects from the Foreign Secretary.

"She requires:—

"1. That he will distinctly state what he proposes in a given case, in order that the Queen may know as distinctly to what she has given her Royal sanction.

"Having once given her sanction to a measure, that it be not arbitrarily altered or modified by the Minister. Such an act she must consider to be a failure in sincerity towards the Crown. . . .

"She expects to be kept informed of what passes between him and the Foreign Ministers before important decisions are taken based upon that intercourse, to receive the foreign despatches in good time, and to have the drafts for her approval sent to her in sufficient time to make herself acquainted with their contents before they are sent off."

It cannot be supposed that this would be a very palatable document to an all-powerful Minister used to wielding the Empire very much at his own discretion—and sometimes, perhaps, without much discretion at all—but it is a vindication of the reality of the Queen's position in having an actual part in the great affairs of the world, and being not merely a puppet of State called to sanction, or by the withholding of a smile, proscribe things with which she had nothing to do—which in accuracy to the full understanding both of Her Majesty's character and place. Even after this, however, it was not always possible to restrain the hasty impulses of the imperious Minister, though on none were we, and he in his turn became Prime Minister (and the favourite of the nation), the usual effect of time and intercourse seem to have drawn the Royal Mistress and the powerful subject into the usual amiable relations.

Another event which disturbed this period was the agitation raised in England by the Pope's brief re-establishing with all the old territorial titles the Roman Catholic hierarchy in England. How far this connection was reasonable we are, perhaps, scarcely qualified now to say; for instance, which so often shows the real pettiness of the Sees of the moment, as but at the same time to obliterate with its haze a great many weighty but necessary considerations which make the popular emotion quite reasonable. The Ecclesiastical Titles Bill shortly after passed, with great difficulty and much Ministerial trouble, though by great majorities, was of small eventual importance, but the indignation and determined resistance of the country to any re-assertion of the Papal authority were fully shown by the immediate movement which took place, in the shape of public meetings, addresses to the House, and a universal protest made by almost every tongue or pen which had weight in England. The Queen fully joined in the feeling, but even at its height expressed herself with a kindness and charity which might have been an example to many. "Sincerely Protestant as I have always been, and always shall be," she said "and indignant as I am at those who call themselves Protestants, though they are in fact quite the contrary, I much regret the unchristian and intolerant spirit exhibited by many people at the public meetings. I cannot bear to hear the violent abuse of the Catholic religion, which is so painful and so cruel towards the many good and innocent Roman Catholics. However, we must hope and trust that this excitement will soon cease, and that the wholesome effect of it upon our own Church will be lasting." This was, however, one of the cases in which the immediate outbreak of feeling was in reality the only thing wanted, or from which any good could result. It showed all parties that England was not on the way to Rome, as had been loudly supposed; but legislation on the subject was scarcely possible.

We have, however, made a digression from the subject named above—the Great Exhibition—which as we have already said, was so entirely the creation of the Prince Consort that it became beyond measure delightful and engrossing to the Queen—to whom what he did was at all times more interesting than anything else in the world. Perhaps she was the only individual in his kingdom who certainly knew how much he laboured for his adopted country. But here at least, was one thing which no one else could appropriate, which was all his from beginning to end. To say that we have got tired since then of Great Exhibitions is no reproach to the first, which was nothing less than a revelation to the world, and which remains to this time not only as a splendid precedent fruitful in results, but as something like a pledge of peaceful intention among the nations—a universal overture of brotherhood, not always followed out as it should be, but always bearing more or less the same meaning. The Exhibition of 1851 was carried on only by the determined work and unfailing energy of the Prince, who stood fast against all dissensions, and overcame every obstacle with firmness, good-humour, and perseverance beyond praise. After every kind of discouragement and opposition the work was finished at last, and by the greatest good fortune the building itself was as unique as the idea, and the spectacular effect produced of the most successful and striking kind. It was a Fairy Palace of Industry and Taste, where even genius did not disdain to dwell, and where wealth and art came together in a way which has been good but ever since, and given a new stimulus to many a branch of skilled labour and the higher handicrafts, as well as the higher interests of trade. The Queen, who had followed every step of the project with unfailing interest, made a visit to it two days before the opening, which filled her with the tenderest delight. "We remained two hours and a-half," she said, "and I came back quite broken, and my head bewildered from the myriads of beautiful and wonderful things which now quite dazzle one's eyes. Such efforts have been made, and our people have shown such taste in their manufactures. All owing to this Great Exhibition, and to Albert—all to him!" Even at the last moment fears of trouble were in the minds of many important persons. The dread of foreign revolutionaries, with murderous projects, stirring up incipient elements of evil in England (though no one knew what) disturbed the mind of the public, to whom the sight of so many foreign faces was unfamiliar. Even Princes of the Blood were, as the Queen, who knew better, says, "to me unaccountably anxious about the great ceremonial of the opening." It is unnecessary to say now that the Queen was right in judging, as she had so good a right to do, her people by herself. And Her Majesty's account of the great undertaking, of the solemnity of the opening, and all the proceedings in which she herself was the chief actor, are, like all she wrote, most animated and graphic, giving a simple and most lifelike account of all that was passing under her eyes. "I was rather tired," she says at the conclusion of this wonderful day, "but we were both so happy, so full of thankfulness." In and throughout all, this triumph was specially dear as being that of her husband. "The proudest and happiest day of my happy life," she calls it, as being full of "the glory of his dear name, united with the glory of my dear country." Every word the Queen wrote on this subject is glow with heated pride and gentle tears.

Though it belongs rather to the private than the public side of life, yet we cannot refrain from quoting while on this subject a charming letter written by the Queen during this same summer, when the sunshine of universal praise and acknowledgment of the Prince's excellence had evidently gone to her heart. It is addressed to Lord John Russell, who had praised a speech made at the Jubilee for the Propagation of the Gospel by Prince Albert. The Queen thanked him for his appreciation, adding an acknowledgment that the

THE QUEEN OPENING THE ROYAL ALBERT HALL, MARCH 29, 1871

subject was a difficult one, and the appreciation of the audience uncertain :—

"At the same time the Queen felt sure that the Prince would say the right thing from her entire confidence in his great tact and judgment. The Queen, at the risk of not appearing sufficiently modest (and yet why should a wife ever be modest about her husband's merits ?), must say that she thinks Lord John Russell will admit now that the Prince is possessed of very extraordinary powers of mind and heart. She feels so proud of being his wife that she cannot refrain from herself paying a tribute to his noble character."

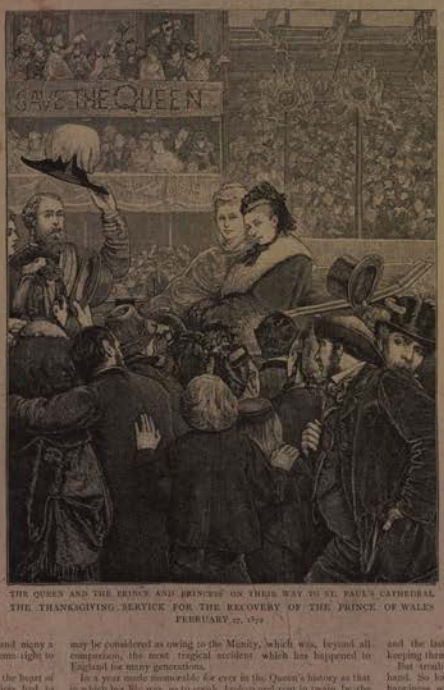
The tender and generous effusiveness of this letter is delightful, and beyond praise. The same summer, on returning from a ball at the Guildhall, which they did not leave till after one o'clock in the morning, the Royal pair found the streets still full of people waiting for them, who made "the dead of night" gay with their applause. "A million of people remained till three in the streets," the Prince writes. "How few Sovereigns have ever had such a true compliment paid them !"

This agitation immediately preceded the great national event of the Crimean War, a war which had changed the aspect of international affairs in many respects. In the previous years the relations of England and France had often been in the most precarious balance. On several occasions moments occurred at which one injudicious step—almost even one injudicious word—of the two have brought about a direct collision between two nations which could do more grievous harm to each other than any other possible belligerents, and whose amity is one of the best pledges of advancing civilisation. The war in the Crimea saw now France and England for the first time fighting side by side against a common enemy. The Queen took her part, as she always did, in the great national agitation. She sent off her Guards personally, if we may say so, waving her farewell to them on the morning of their march, with all the emotion which characterises a personal parting ; and when her soldiers came back distributed with her own hands, as she has done ever since after any military achievement, the medals given for distinguished valour. She had in the meantime given her name to a new distinction, the most glorious of the time—the Victoria Cross ; a reward now more highly prized than any other honour. It was instituted for the reward only of that highest valour which exposes or sacrifices itself for the saving of others. No soldier decoration (and also—it must be said—few less beautiful) ever rested on heroic bosom ; and it could come to fitly from no hands as from those of a woman and a Queen.

Even the very time of this war had its splendours—splendours almost greater than any that had preceded them. The last distinguished Royal visitors whom the Queen received had been the Emperor of Russia and Louis Philippe, King of the French. Had it been done on purpose, by ordinance of heaven, to exhibit to some wandering choir of student angels the curious changes and instability of human things, no more perfect contradiction of the past could have been selected for the next Royal person for whom bells rung, and guns were fired, and banners waved in England, was Louis Napoleon, Emperor of the French, our ally against Russia, nearest neighbour, and loyal brother of our Sovereign in the limited confraternity of monarchs. Old Louis Philippe was dead in exile, and Nicholas unkindly dying in St. Petersburg of failure and defeat and a broken heart, when the man who had displaced the one, and helped to crush the other, and who was, in his own person, but a poor representative of the great soldier of fortune, whose name he hoped soon to receive all the honours that had been lately paid to those in Windsor. Such a strange revolution of fortune has very seldom happened in the world. And the interest is still more enhanced when we remember what fate overtook this wonderful man in his turn—a fate compounded of the griefs of both his predecessors, defeat, shame, sorrow, and exile. Nothing could have been more splendid than his reception in England, where there had been many a severe comment on his grasp at power, and many a harsh criticism of the means ; but where France's supreme right to decide in her own case had been long acknowledged.

The war lasted for one terrible winter, during which the heart of England was sore for the privations which her soldiers had to undergo—and a portion of another ; but very early in the year 1856 it was finally over. The rejoicings for the peace were very enthusiastic, and there can be no doubt that the country was very thankful to be done with war, having already begun to doubt the excellence of the cause, and feeling itself much opposed to the French, and generally unclear under the circumstances. However, nothing but good humour has ever been publicly apparent in respect to the Crimea. Some of the results of the war were of a good kind. We recovered that respect for our soldiers which is always worth preserving, and since that period many schemes for their elevation and improvement have been carried out. The Queen gave a graphic account of the manner in which the happy news of the peace was received at Balmoral, where she then was.

Another great and terrible war, if war it could be called, followed very speedily upon that of the Crimea. It was, perhaps, the most horrible in which the British nation was ever engaged. Atrocities which we had learned to regard as mere chimeras of the past, and which civilisation and the course of progress seemed to have made impossible, took place before our eyes upon our own flesh and blood, and the savage insults as well as cruelty which were showered upon British families in India roused the English nation at home to one of those passionate outbursts of feeling which make a nation feel like an individual, and sweep away all the moderating influence of diversities of opinion. The story of the Indian Mutiny is too dreadful to be told even now with anything like calm, and at the moment the national mind was roused almost to frenzy. It was full of the most heartrending and spirit-stirring episodes, dangers as terrible and deliverances as unlooked-for as ever happened in the earlier ages. It ended—as we have all been born in the certainty that every war undertaken by Englishmen must end—in complete victory. The political result of this great national trial was that the old government of the East India Company—the most curious and anomalous power which, perhaps, ever existed—was finally abolished, and that the Imperial Government was established in name as well as in fact there as in all other parts of the national domain. The whole civil and military service of India was transformed by this change, and many important differences made. Of course, so far as the Queen was concerned, the change—even that recent one which has altered her honoured title, in regard to the Eastern portion of her possessions, and made her Empress—was no real change at all ; for Her Majesty never had more faithful servants nor England more devoted sons than in the soldiers and civilians of the Company's Service. That the change of Government has produced many other results of an important kind, all of which may be considered as owing to the Mutiny, which was, beyond all comparison, the most tragical accident which has happened to England for many generations.



THE QUEEN AND THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS ON THEIR WAY TO ST. PAUL'S CATHEDRAL FOR THE THANKSGIVING SERVICE FOR THE RECOVERY OF THE PRINCE OF WALES FEBRUARY 27, 1872

In a year made memorable for ever in the Queen's history as that in which her life was, so to speak, broken and rent in twain by the death of her much beloved husband, the great American Civil War, with all the painful consequences to ourselves, occurred.

JOY AND SORROW

We may now resume the more individual strain of biography. For while all these events had been going on there had grown up in Royal Windsor, around the young pair whom we accompanied there for the honeymoon, the group of Princes and Princesses with whom we are now all so familiar. When the country was just emerging from the anguish of the Indian Mutiny, and beginning to fix capable once more of happier thoughts, the first marriage in the Queen's family brought a gleam of brightness into the sombre history of the time. The Princess Royal, the eldest daughter and favourite of the nation, Victoria—like her mother, and very like her mother in other ways, with the singular tenacity of the Royal Family to the same type of feature and colour—married Prince Frederick William of Prussia, whom, and whose splendid but tragic story we all have learned so well since then—the future Prince Imperial of Germany and Emperor of Unit as yet undeveloped and scarcely hoped for Empire—to the perfect satisfaction of her parents. The Queen had been too happy in her own married life not to prize happy marriages for her children beyond all other forms of good fortune. The betrothal of the young Princess (only seventeen) took place at Balmoral, and the Queen herself told us of the pretty circumstances that attended the Royal love-tale, so like all other love-tales in all climes, small and great :—

"Our dear Victoria was this day (September 29th, 1855) engaged to Prince Frederick William of Prussia, who had been on a visit to us since the 24th. He had already spoken to us on the 26th of his wishes ; but we were uncertain, on account of her extreme youth, whether he should speak to her himself or wait till he came back again. However, we felt it was better he should do so ; and during our ride up Craig-na-ban this afternoon, he picked a piece of white heather (the emblem of good luck) which he gave to her ; and this enabled him to make an allusion to his hopes and wishes, which led to this happy conclusion."

The marriage took place in the very beginning of 1858, in the beautiful Chapel of St. George at Windsor, the Chapel of the Garter, and, next to Westminster, the most Royal and stately of all English sacred places.

With this marriage a new era in the family life began. It is good when the boys and girls grow up, and spread their new life over the world, carrying love and tender thoughts with them wherever they go ; but there are pangs in it which fathers and mothers will always realise. A few years after the pretty young Princess went forth to her new country, the Prince of Wales began his work as an apprentice to that hard trade of Royalty and representative power for which his parents and his country. "The time had now come to arrange for the fulfilment of a promise which had been made by the Queen to the Canadians that the Prince of Wales should pay a visit to their country. The promise had been given during the Crimean War (for which Canada had levied and equipped a regiment of infantry) in answer to a request that Her Majesty would visit the American possessions. The Canadian deputation by whom this request was conveyed were officially told that it would be unbecoming to expose the Sovereign to the risks of the voyage and the fatigues attending such a visit. The Canadians then asked that the Queen should give them one of her sons as Governor-General. Their youth made this impossible, but an assurance was given that as soon as the Prince of Wales was old enough to do so he should visit Canada. This promise was fulfilled in 1860, when he was nineteen. About the same time Prince Alfred, the sailor-boy of the family, joined his ship, and set out for the Cape.

The next of the family to come forward with modest grace into the foreground is Princess Alice, a name now made sacred by death. "A graceful young woman," is her father's description of her in this early moment of youth, when she, too, was unfolding. The sons were still absent when the second daughter began to answer also to the first call of nature life. There had been a visitor at Windsor whom the anxious parents had seen to be attached to, and to attract the child who was then the chief ornament of their house. The young suitor was all that parents could desire for their child, and by and bye there occurred the following pretty scene :—"After dinner, while talking to the gentlemen (it is the Queen who speaks), I perceived Alice and Louis talking before the fireplace more earnestly than usual, and when I passed to go to the other room, both came up to me, and Alice in much agitation said that he had proposed to her, and he begged for my blessing. . . . Louis has a warm, noble heart. We embraced our dear Alice, and *praised her much* to him."

This is one of the natural simple touches of detail which make all the Queen's notes so graphic. Then the children were all taking wing, fluttering eastward with young princes, ready for many a flight over land and sea. With still so many younger children at home the flutter and stir of all these new lives beginning, notwithstanding the partings involved, made the atmosphere all the more lively and bright—the parents being still young themselves, and the last of their flock not much more than a baby, and keeping them all amused with her baby wit and wisdom.

But trouble which had kept so long away was now near at hand. So long a stretch of happiness is given to few, as indeed, happiness so complete is rarely given to any. "To-day our marriage comes of age, according to law," the Prince Consort writes. "We have faithfully kept our pledge for better and for worse, and have only to thank God that he has vouchsafed so much happiness to us. May He have us in His keeping for the days to come ! You have, I trust, found good and loving children in us, and we have experienced nothing but love and kindness from you."

This was written to the Duchess of Kent, the good and wise mother with whom their history began. Alas for the days to come ! This was on the 10th of February, 1861. In the middle of March the first cloud that had overshadowed the Queen's life appeared, drifting suddenly upwards and covering the sky with gloom. She had been so happy !—in all her letters, in everything she says, this blessedness peals fourth. She talked of the anniversary of "our blessed marriage—a day which has brought us only inestimable blessing !" little thinking, alas, poor lady ! that this anniversary was the last—"very few can say with me," she cried in an outburst of thankful pride and joy, "that their husband at the end of twenty-one years is not only full of the fondest kindness and affection which a truly happy marriage brings with

BLUEJACKETS MARCHING PAST THE ROYAL STAND

THE QUEEN REVIEWING THE ASHANTI NAVAL BRIGADE AT GOSPORT ON APRIL 23, 1874

it, but of the same tender love as in the very first days of our marriage."

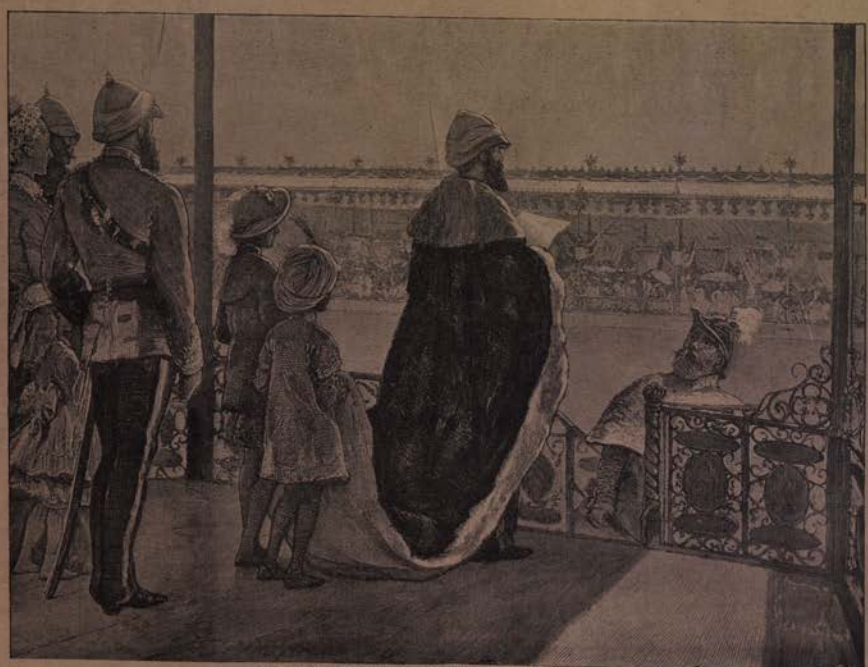
In another month this happy wife and her husband were in dutiful and sad attendance at the mother's death-bed. The Queen had never known what grief was before. She was taken in full tide of her prosperous life unprepared for sorrow. "Oh, what agony, what despair is this!" she cries, when some attendant, thinking to comfort her, prophesies for her mother "a gentle ending." "I was left alone gazing on that beloved form," she writes a little further on; "and feeling as if my heart would break." She says afterwards, with the simplicity of an emotion so deep, yet so natural, "The constant crying was a relief. But, oh! the sickness of heart—the thought of the daily, hourly blank!—never a day that I did not get letters from or about her several times in the day." "The mother I so tenderly loved, from whom for these forty-one years I had never been parted, except for a week," the Queen added, and her journal is full of the most touching descriptions, such as we all could parallel, of the forsaken rooms—everything the same, except that the once presence, which gave all a meaning, is gone for ever. But all this real and deep sorrow was but a prelude to that which was coming. The death of a parent is so natural—so inevitable. The Duchess was old, full of years and honours. She had got her reward for the many sacrifices and self-renunciations of her life. But to look at the head of that young and happy house, himself still so young, in the very fullness of his manhood; who could think that he was so soon to follow? The most indifferent, even an enemy—if there had been an enemy in the world to this gentle, beneficent, honest, pure household—could not have contemplated such a possibility without dismay.

The Queen came back to Windsor after her usual holidays in Scotland in the end of October of this fatal year 1861. "The first day the Queen's wounds were opened afresh, and she suffered greatly, as it is the first time she has lived there without finding

LISTENING TO SCOTCH MUSIC AT THE BANQUET IN ST. GEORGE'S HALL

THE QUEEN ENTERTAINING THE TSAR AT WINDSOR, MAY, 1874

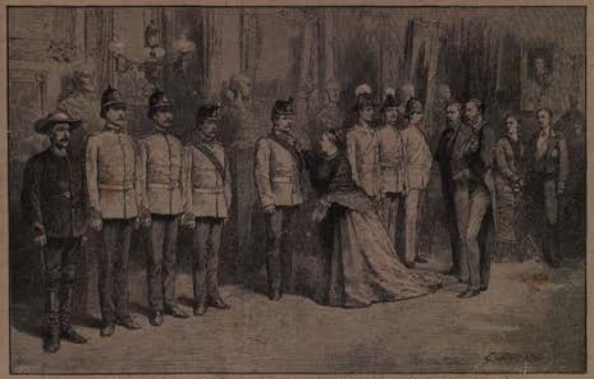
GENERAL VIEW OF THE CEREMONY AT THE CAMP THREE MILES FROM THE CITY



LORD LYTTON READING A TELEGRAM OF GREETING TO THE INDIAN PEOPLE

LORD LYTTON PROCLAIMING THE QUEEN EMPRESS OF INDIA AT DELHI, JANUARY 1, 1877

THE QUEEN AND MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY IN 1877



HER MAJESTY DECORATING OFFICERS AND MEN WHO HAD DISTINGUISHED THEMSELVES IN THE ZULU CAMPAIGN AT WINDSOR CASTLE DECEMBER 2, 1879

THE QUEEN PRESENTING THE ALBERT MEDAL FOR SAVING LIFE TO COAST-GUARDSMAN OAKLEY, AT FERRY HILL JUNCTION, MAY 29, 1880

HER MAJESTY LEAVING HOLYROOD CASTLE
REVIEW OF VOLUNTEERS BY THE QUEEN AT EDINBURGH, AUGUST 24, 1881

AT THE SALUTING POST.
REVIEW OF VOLUNTEERS BY THE QUEEN AT WINDSOR, JULY 5, 1881

THE QUEEN RECEIVING SIR GARNET WOLSELEY AT BALMORAL ON HIS RETURN FROM EGYPT, OCTOBER 29, 1882

THE QUEEN REVIEWING THE TROOPS FROM EGYPT IN ST. JAMES'S PARK, NOVEMBER 18, 1882

Mamma at Frogmore," Prince Albert writes. But the new beginning was made with courage and patience, and time began to heal the wound. Early in November a sad series of events occurred in Portugal, in the young Royal family there, the sons of another Prince of Saxe-Coburg, who had also in his sphere fulfilled the part of a Prince Consort to the comfort and happiness of his wife's kingdom. Typhoid fever broke out among the Princes, and in a few weeks the young King (who had lost his young wife a year or two previously of the same disorder) and two of his brothers were dead. These sad events, it is evident, made a great impression upon Prince Albert. The letters of both the Queen and the Prince are full of them, and they seem to have given a kind of shock and chill to his very existence. He was "low and sad," ailing, and unable to get over the mournful impression; and Her Majesty took fright, and anxiously begged those around him as much as possible to save him from the multitudinous exertions which were expected of him. The Prince's courage and heart seem, indeed, to have failed him all at once. He had suddenly grown weary in the midst of his days. Not that he intermitted a single exertion, or withdrew from any one of the claims upon him; but he was tired, though it was still but noonday, and life seemed to stretch far before him. "He had no wish to die," his biographer tells us; "but he did not care for living." Not long before his fatal illness, in speaking to the Queen he said: "I do not cling to life; you do; but I set no store by it. If I knew that those I love were well cared for, I should be quite ready to die to-morrow." In the same conversation he added, "I am sure if I had a severe illness I should give up at once; I should not struggle for life."

Ominous and pathetic words for the will to live is often half the battle. Prince Albert had gone into harness at twenty. He had never relaxed in his labours for all those twenty-one years. A crowned head has no holiday, and his was almost more than the labour which falls upon a crowned head. He had never rested nor thought of rest. Telegrams and despatches had followed him wherever he went, even when he was not absolutely at work. And now the inevitable reaction had come. He was weary in the middle of the way.

From this time forward he was never well. "Am very wretched." "Thoroughly unwell." "Have scarcely closed my eyes at night for the last fortnight." These were the records that were found afterwards in his diary. But, weary as he was, he kept on, with that sense of duty which never deserted him. At least it almost seems as if he moved half-mechanically, longing growing upon him in the laborious routine from which there was no escape, although a last flash of brilliant exertion, a last effort of fine good sense and feeling, prompted him to modify a despatch to the American Government and thus avert trouble over a delicate negotiation, only a fortnight before his death. He was ill then. "He could eat no breakfast, and looked very wretched" on the morning of the day on which he roused himself to do this piece of work for England. That morning the doctors were called in, and it became apparent that a serious illness was coming on.

The Queen has given a full account of his illness in the "Life"—all its vicissitudes; the moments when he was better; the sad attempts to be cheerful and amuse him—all those tremulous changes most of us know so well. "I was sadly nervous with all the ups and downs of hope and fear," Her Majesty says, feeling all her kingdom contracted into that sick-room, where she was no Queen, but a weeping, trembling suppliant, praying in vain, as so many of us have done, for the life most dear to her. Most touching are the details of this last illness. He asked for music, and a piano was brought into the adjoining room, on which the Princess Alice played to him the old religious music of his youth. Then, in the hushed room, the Queen sat and read aloud in a vain attempt to amuse him. Now and then his interest was attracted; but who can tell what thoughts accompanied these reasons—solemn thoughts of the listener, agonising incomprehension on the part of the reader of the very words which her own lips were uttering. Other women who have done the same by other deathbeds will understand what it was. How many of us could call forth similar scenes from the dim caves of memory. "He was so pleased to see me, stroked my face and smiled, and called me *liebe Frauchen* (dear little wife)." So This with alternations of wistful hope the days ran on. There was a picture hanging in his room, a copy of one of Raphael's Madonnas, which, he said, "helps me through the day;" but even then he could not quite free his mind from the larger affairs which, till they dropped out of his hands, had been his chief business. "You have not forgotten the important communication to Nemours?" he asked only two days before the end. But by-and-by nothing but an expression of love now and then would come from those pale lips—"Dear wife! good little wife!" was all he said.

This flag was captured by General Graham's forces at Tokar, on March 1, the day after the Battle of El Teb
LIEUTENANT WILFORD LLOYD PRESENTING ONE OF THE MAHDI'S FLAGS TO THE QUEEN AT WINDSOR, MARCH 25, 1884

Her Majesty was accompanied by Princess Beatrice and Prince Henry of Battenberg. One sufferer, Private George Marshall, of the 1st Berkshire Regiment, whose leg had been amputated, particularly attracted the attention of the Queen, who went to his bedside, and asked how he was getting on

THE QUEEN VISITING WOUNDED SOLDIERS FROM THE SOUDAN AT NETLEY, MAY 16, 1885

THE QUEEN AT WINDSOR CASTLE DISTRIBUTING MEDALS FOR DISTINGUISHED CONDUCT IN THE FIELD, ON NOVEMBER 25, 1885

AFTER THE SOUDAN CAMPAIGN OF 1884-85

THE ROYAL PROCESSION CROSSING THE PRINCES' CHAMBER ON THE WAY TO THE HOUSE OF LORDS

THE QUEEN OPENING PARLIAMENT, 1886

THE QUEEN EMBRACING THE PRINCESS OF WALES IN WESTMINSTER ABBEY AFTER THE JUBILEE SERVICE, JUNE 21, 1887

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE ROYAL PROCESSION ARRIVING AT WESTMINSTER ABBEY

THE QUEEN'S JUBILEE SERVICE, JUNE 21, 1887

A GREETING FROM THE HOUNDS OF THE EAST SUFFOLK HUNT

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO SANDRINGHAM, APRIL, 1874

THE QUEEN CONGRATULATING THE ROYAL PAIR

THE MARRIAGE OF PRINCESS LOUISE OF WALES TO THE DUKE OF FIFE, JULY 27, 1889

Many of those who read this will recollect the shock and pang of dismay and sorrow with which we all heard on that wintry Sunday morning that the Prince was dead. His danger was even but imperfectly known when the sudden terrible news went forth—news which touched every home as with a personal blow. The present writer remembers well the wondering, pale crowds streaming out of the churches, where in many cases the news was heard for the first time, not able to believe it—scarcely able to speak of it. Not for his sake—he is said with regret that not till after he was gone for ever did we fully recognise what a man he was—but for hers. Wherever two people met that day throughout the three kingdoms other questions were forgotten, and all that any one could say was "The poor Queen! Oh, the poor Queen!" And we all know how she fell under the blow—dropped away as was so natural from all the pleasantness and brightness of life, covered her face, and shrank from the light.

It was on the 14th of December, 1861, that Prince Albert died. And it was only after his death that he received the appreciation which his singularly perfect character deserved. This appreciation he had got from all who came in contact with him in his lifetime; but by the mass of the people who were not near enough to fall under his personal influence, he was not sufficiently known to be beloved. Perhaps, if truth were told, he was too uniformly noble, too high above all soil and fault, to win the fickle popular admiration, which is more caught by picturesque irregularity than by the higher perfections of a wholly worthy life. But after his death, and chiefly since the Queen's own generous and tender impulse prompted her to make the country the confidant of her great love and happiness, the Prince Consort had full justice. The record of their mutual life has interwoven the happiest and purest hours of existence with the national history.

After this melancholy epoch the Queen's life was for a long time entirely changed, and she suffered by moments from the unjust judgment of her people. The country complained of her for the first time; but the complaint itself was the highest proof of love and honour. The one reproach that has been raised against Her Majesty is that in her sorrow she fell out of the practice of that intercourse with her people in which the country delighted. England grudged her seclusion, her mourning, the true and profound grief of her widowhood; although, at the same time, with very natural and thoroughly English perversity, the country was proud of the faithful sorrow which would not be consoled. More and more, however, as it was known what the Prince had been to the Queen, the overwhelming grief of her widowhood was better understood. It has been said again and again to her eternal honour, that she never failed in her attention to business through all these years of sorrow. But her courage failed her for the gaieties of life, the ceremonials of State, and that office of social leader and head, which no one else could fill, but which it is so hard to undertake with a sorrowful heart. Even these duties, however, Her Majesty by degrees, as she was able for the exertion, to

A PRESENTATION AT A DRAWING ROOM AT BUCKINGHAM PALACE IN 1899

On May 20, 1900, a body of officers representing the army, headed by the Duke of Cambridge, presented to the Queen, at Buckingham Palace, a large centrepiece wrought in hammered silver gilt, symbolical of the power and greatness of the Empire

PRESENTING THE JUBILEE GIFT TO THE QUEEN FROM BRITISH OFFICERS

THE MARRIAGE OF THE DUKE OF YORK AND PRINCESS VICTORIA MARY OF TECK IN THE CHAPEL ROYAL, ST. JAMES'S, JULY 6, 1893

THE CHRISTENING OF THE INFANT SON OF THE DUKE AND DUCHESS OF YORK AT WHITE LODGE, RICHMOND, JULY 18, 1894

THE QUEEN PRESENTING KHAMA AND HIS COLLEAGUES WITH HER PORTRAIT
THE BECHUANALAND CHIEFS AT WINDSOR, NOVEMBER, 1895

some extent has resumed. And the marriage of the greater number of her children, and the bringing up of a second generation about the Royal House restored more or less, as years passed, the atmosphere of cheerfulness and hope.

These marriages have all been, on the model of Her Majesty's own union, marriages of inclination, the setting up of many household as full of affection and happiness as it is our national boast an English home in every rank and condition of life is, far beyond the average of any other nation, as in no other nation is the theory that love alone is the great condition of marriage so fully acknowledged. The first event in the life of the Royal Family, after the loss of its head, was the marriage of the Princess Alice, which was one of the last domestic arrangements sanctioned and settled by the Prince Consort before his death. That it was an event almost more full of sadness than of gladness was inevitable in the melancholy circumstances. It took place at Osborne in the very depth of mourning, without any of the state and splendour which has usually accompanied Royal marriages. It was in deference to the Princess's wishes that the ceremony was not delayed, but nothing could bring the smiles and joy back to the hearts or faces of the widow and fatherless. Princess Alice was in many respects at that period the most prominent of the Queen's children. Her behaviour at the death of her father, the self-command and native force of character which made her, a slight girl of seventeen, the prop and support, it is scarcely too much to say, on which not only the distracted mother, but the whole

many of the scions of German houses who are distinguished by that title. The Duke of Edinburgh made the most splendid of matches by bringing home in 1874 the daughter of the Tsar, the Grand Duchess Marie, as his bride. The marriage of the three younger children of the Royal house followed in succession. Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught, marrying the daughter of the famous "Red Prince," Prince Frederick Charles of Prussia; Prince Leopold, the daughter of the Prince of Waldeck-Pyrmont; and Princess Beatrice, Prince Henry of Battenberg.

This latter portion of Her Majesty's life was not however, without great anxieties and sorrows. In 1871, when peace had begun to settle again over the distracted Continent, and the happier part of the German conquest, that which concerned their internal reorganisation and establishment in one great Empire had brought Her Majesty the pleasure of a hope fulfilled—the hope of one dearer than herself, her never-forgotten husband—as well as that of a great and splendid enlargement as was hoped of the future plan and position to be filled by her daughter, then suddenly rose a great and threatening cloud which involved the whole unbroken family in gloom. The Prince of Wales fell ill in the autumn of this year with fever, the same as that which had carried off his father ten years before. The disease ran its full and longest course, and the life of the heir of their kingdom sank to what seemed the last weakness. The universal enthusiasm and delight when the Prince, restored to life and health, went in State to St. Paul's to render thanks for his recovery by the side of his happy mother was

of vestibule to the Palace at Darmstadt where all that suffering was. One of the children died in a week; the others suffered greatly, but began to recover, when at the last, having seen them all out of danger, the Princess caught the fatal malady. There were various accounts—all equally pathetic and touching—given of the manner in which she caught it. It was said, for one thing, that, unable to restrain her anguish after weeks of suffering, the poor mother had kissed one of the children, whose little feverish face had been turned to her appealingly in the struggles of the dreadful complaint. Another—and it is supposed the true one—that, worn out by all that she had gone through during those weeks of agony, she laid her head in her weariness on her husband's pillow, perhaps in a moment of desperation, when all she loved seemed to be passing from her. Her strength had been utterly exhausted, and she had no power to resist the terrible complaint. The husband and the children got better, but the young mother, in the height of life, at the time when existence was most sweet, was taken from those she had nursed so tenderly.

Six years after, the youngest son—the invalid of the house from his birth, he who had called forth the most anxiety and continual care among that family, for the most part so robust and active, and who had, in consequence, rarely left his mother's side—Prince Leopold, also died in the most sudden and startling manner, adding the effect of a great and painful shock to the natural grief.

Thus, with the usual mingled round of joy and trouble, of anxiety and deliverance, and often long intervals of calm, the Queen

WATCHING THE BONFIRES ON THE HILLS ROUND BALMORAL
THE TSAR'S VISIT TO THE QUEEN, OCTOBER, 1896

THE QUEEN RECEIVING LI HUNG CHANG AT OSBORNE, AUGUST, 1896
A DISTINGUISHED VISITOR FROM CHINA

framework of the Constitutional Sovereignty rested for the moment, and filled the whole country with a sorrowful enthusiasm. Through this deep daughter the Queen had almost a personal share in the suffering involved in the great public calamities which soon after rent the Continent and changed the face of Europe. The Queen had relations immeasurable in those battles which concerned us so little, except in the way of sympathy, during the dreadful year 1870. Her Majesty could never tell what a day, what a telegram might bring of sudden calamity—for indeed are little regardful of princes, and the Queen of England's daughter was as likely as any poor soldier's wife in all that vast host to have her home made desolate, and her life shattered any day.

We have, however, omitted to note other family events which preceded this. The marriage of the Prince of Wales, in 1863, to the beautiful and popular princess of whom the country has ever since been so proud, recognising the indefinable charm of beauty and grace with a universal sentiment almost stronger than any other in the general mind, transcending even personal worth and greatness. The marriage of the Princess Helena, in 1866, and Louise, in 1871, soon followed; the latter on the conclusion of the stormy period of the Continental wars, and distinguished by the first breach of the long-standing Royal custom of marrying the daughters of the reigning house only to Princes; although the bridegroom in this case, though a subject, had as genuine a title to be called Prince, had such been the fashion in these islands, as many a secondary Continental Sovereign, and much more than

commonplace in comparison with the extraordinary passion which took place in the life of the nation during his illness. It was a thing which no one could have anticipated, and which could have been produced by nothing but the spontaneous feeling which made millions of people recognise themselves as all of one family and kin. The greatest anxiety and trial thus happily overcome, is, perhaps, not to be ranked as an evil in life, overwhelming as it is while it lasts, for the greatness of the trial does but increase the joy. How much Her Majesty appreciated the public sympathy a public letter dated February 29, 1872, shows:—"Words are too weak," it runs, "for the Queen to say how very deeply touched and gratified she has been by the immense enthusiasm and affection exhibited towards her dear son and herself." But the Queen was soon to encounter other anxieties which had not the same fortunate end. In 1874 the family at Heme, so specially dear to Her Majesty, the children of that daughter Alice, who had been her mother's comforter and companion in the greatest of her sorrows, was seized with an alarming attack of diphtheria, which assailed one member after another—father and six children—all except the much-tried mother who was left to nurse them, though herself still in feeble health consequent upon the tragic death of one of her children from a fall from the open window, which had occurred in her own room and under her eyes. A period of great anxiety followed—a lasting a month, during which telegrams perpetually reached the Queen of every variation in the state of the patient, so that Windsor Castle became but a part

pursued her quiet round of duty never neglected, and Royal functions performed with almost too little ostentation, so that the ignorant scarcely knew, and the best-informed often forgot, how onerous and exhausting these were, until she reached the climax of her Jubilee, after fifty years of faithful service to her country and the world. This great event, if was instantly perceived by all, must be celebrated in a manner worthy of its rarity in history, and of the great veneration and affection borne, not only by her own dominions in that famous circle upon which the sun never sets, but by the whole civilised world, towards the most honoured Sovereign in Christendom. Her Majesty went in state to Westminster Abbey to make her thanksgiving through two endless living walls of her subjects, crowding every window, every housetop, every pavement on her way, giving forth one prolonged shout of applause and blessing, and meeting her eyes wherever they turned with the smiles and tears of multitudes, rich and poor, faces all beaming welcome, and full of tender reverence and admiration. She was surrounded and escorted—by a brilliant and romantic inspiration too full of poetry to have come, one would think, from any official brain—by a bodyguard of Princes, her sons, and sons-in-law, the future King of England and the future Emperor of Germany among the band, a gallant group who inspired the imagination above any other detail of the procession, though that included a number of Sovereigns, Western Kings, and Eastern Princes, the latter blazing in diamonds and splendid colour, amid the more sombre costumes of Christendom.

THE ARCHBISHOP DOING HOMAGE TO HER MAJESTY.

AFTER THE DIAMOND JUBILEE SERVICE AT ST. PAUL'S, JUNE 22, 1897

DRAWN BY W. SMALL

THE ROYAL YACHT ARRIVING IN KINGSTOWN HARBOUR, AUG. 3

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO IRELAND, 1900

THE QUEEN'S VISIT TO IRELAND, 1900

The Queen was surrounded on this occasion by her joyful and united family, sons and daughters, sons-in-law and daughters-in-law, and the already numerous descendants of her House in the second generation, in full prosperity and happiness, so many households full of love and strength, adding hope and the highest prospects for the future to this climax of the mother's individual life. Perhaps the most remarked of the band of Princes who surrounded the carriage of the Queen on the day of Jubilee was the gallant and manly figure of the Crown Prince of Germany, the husband of her eldest daughter, the Princess Royal of Great Britain. But this noble Prince was already overshadowed by the disease which was to place the seal of mortal vanity upon so many prospects and hopes. There was no pair more apt to bear the weight of empire, more qualified to carry out the highest schemes, than Frederick of Prussia and Victoria, his English wife, both in full maturity of years and mind and moral and intellectual force, who had naturally looked for years to this great inheritance. The whole world knows the mournful tale, one of the most tragic chapters of contemporary history. Thus the heaviest trouble came again upon the Queen's life and family. She herself, with that courage and indifference to personal exertion which always distinguished her, made a hasty and fatiguing journey to Berlin in the spring in order to see, to cheer, and stimulate in their struggle, the husband who was dying heroically by inches at his post, and the wife who, in the exercise of heroism almost greater, had to stand by and see him die. Neither Her Majesty's age nor her health were such as to strengthen her for such efforts. But she carried out her purpose with her usual calm valour, and, as a matter of fact, overawed all opposition, and was received with the utmost respect during her short and anxious visit, which gave her the mournful satisfaction at least of bidding farewell to one who had been to her a son.

In November, 1891, the serious illness of Prince George of Wales from typhoid fever once more cast a gloom over the Court, but happily only for a moment, and the year closed joyfully with the convalescence of the young Prince, and with the preparations for the marriage of the Duke of Clarence and Avondale to the Princess Victoria Mary of Teck. This match was an extremely popular one, and all classes were looking forward to the celebration with the keenest interest, when the news came from Sandringham that the Duke was suffering from influenza and inflammation of the lungs. For some days there was still hope, and then, on Thursday, January 14, came the fatal news that the Duke had passed away. The tragedy of the event on the very eve of the marriage came as a shock to everyone, but to the Queen and the Princess of Wale, it was an irremediable trial, and public sympathy was deeply stirred. The Duke was given a military funeral at Windsor, and shortly afterwards the Queen addressed a letter to the Empress which had so genuinely mourned with her. This letter which will

INSPECTING INVALIDED COLONIAL VOLUNTEERS FROM SOUTH AFRICA AT WINDSOR, NOVEMBER, 1900

THE QUEEN AND HER COLONIAL TROOPS

THE FIRST TEST OF A TRULY GREAT MAN IS HIS HUMILITY.—*Ruskin.*

'Modest Humility is Beauty's Crown.'

HUMANITY OF THIS LIFE.

NEVER TO BLEND OUR PLEASURE OR OUR PRIDE WITH SORROW OF THE MEANEST THING THAT FEELS.—WORDSWORTH.

TO LIVE IN THE HEARTS WE LEAVE BEHIND IS NOT TO DIE.

PRESIDENT LINCOLN.

His life was gentle, and the elements so mix'd in him, that Nature might stand up and say to all the world, 'This was a man.'—SHAKSPERE.

"He was almost as tender-hearted as a woman. 'I have not wilfully planted a thorn in any man's bosom,' he was able to say. His patience was inexhaustible. He loved **Manliness, Truth, and Justice. He despised all Trickery and Selfish Greed. . . . Yielding** and accommodating in non-essentials, he was inflexibly firm in **principle** or position deliberately taken. . . . Let us have faith that right makes right . . . . Come what will, **I will keep my faith with friend or foe.' Benevolence and Forgiveness** were the **basis** of his character. **His World-Wide Humanity** is aptly embodied in a phrase of his second Inaugural: **'WITH MALICE TOWARD NONE, WITH CHARITY FOR ALL.' HIS NATURE WAS DEEPLY RELIGIOUS,** but belonged to no denomination. **He had Faith** in the eternal justice and **boundless mercy of Providence,** and made the golden rule of **Christ his practical creed. . . . Architect of his own Fortunes** doing with every opportunity, **mastering** every **emergency,** fulfilling every duty, he not **only proved** himself pre-eminently the man for the hour, but the signal benefactor of posterity. As Statesman, Ruler, and Liberator, **CIVILISATION WILL HOLD HIS NAME IN PERPETUAL HONOUR."**

COL. J. G. NICOLY, *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

He committed to memory the following sublime poem, and his love of it has certainly made it IMMORTAL. He often said it was one of the finest productions of the English language, and would give a great deal to find out its author.

OH! WHY SHOULD THE SPIRIT OF MORTAL BE PROUD?

Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?
Like a swift-fleeting meteor, a fast-flying cloud,
A flash of the lightning, a break of the wave,
Man passes from life to his rest in the grave.

The leaves of the oak and the willow shall fade,
Be scattered around and together be laid;
And the young and the old, the low and the high,
Shall moulder to dust, and together shall die.

The child that a mother attended and loved,
The mother that infant's affection who proved,
The husband that mother and infant who blessed,
Each, all, are away to their dwellings of rest.

The maid on whose cheek, on whose brow, in whose eye,
Shone beauty and pleasure, her triumphs are by;
And the memory of those who loved her and praised
Are alike from the minds of the living erased.

The hand of the king that the sceptre hath borne,
The brow of the priest that the mitre hath worn,
The eye of the sage, and the heart of the brave,
Are hidden and lost in the depths of the grave.

The peasant whose lot was to sow and to reap,
The herdsman who climb'd with his goats to the steep,
The beggar who wander'd in search of his bread,
Have faded away like the grass that we tread.

The saint who enjoy'd the communion of Heaven,
The sinner who dared to remain unforgiven,
The wise and the foolish, the guilty and just,
Have quietly mingled their bones in the dust.

So the multitude goes, like the flower and the weed
That wither away to let others succeed;
So the multitude comes, even those we behold,
To repeat every tale that has often been told.

For we are the same our fathers have been;
We see the same sights our fathers have seen;
We drink the same stream, and feel the same sun,
And run the same course that our fathers have run.

The thoughts we are thinking our fathers would think;
From the death we are shrinking from they, too, would shrink;
To the life we are clinging to they, too, would cling;
But it speeds from the earth like a bird on the wing.

They loved, but their story we cannot unfold;
They scorned, but the heart of the haughty is cold;
They grieved, but no wail from their slumbers will come;
They joyed, but the voice of their gladness is dumb.

They died—ay! they died; and we things that are now,
Who walk on the turf that lies over their brow,
Who make in their dwellings a transient abode,
Meet the changes they met on their pilgrimage road.

Yea, hope and despondence, and pleasure and pain,
Are mingled together in sunshine and rain;
And the smile and the tear, the song and the dirge
Still follow each other like surge upon surge.

'Tis the wink of an eye, 'tis the draught of a breath,
From the blossom of health to the paleness of death,
From the gilded saloon to the bier and the shroud.
Oh! why should the spirit of mortal be proud?

Here hath been dawning Another blue day; Think, wilt thou let it Slip useless away?

T. CARLYLE.

WHAT HIGHER AIM CAN MAN ATTAIN THAN CONQUEST OVER HUMAN PAIN?

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ONLY TRUTH CAN GIVE TRUE REPUTATION—ONLY REALITY CAN BE OF REAL PROFIT.—THE SECRET OF SUCCESS—STERLING HONESTY OF PURPOSE—WITHOUT IT LIFE IS A SHAM

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bess repeating in full mine:—"I must once again give expression to my deep sense of the loyalty and affectionate sympathy evinced by my subjects in every part of Empire on an occasion more sad and tragical than any but one which has befallen me and mine, as well as the nation. The overwhelming misfortune of my dearly loved grandson having been thus suddenly cut off in the flower of his age, full of promise for the future, amiable and gentle, and endearing himself to all, renders it hard for his sorely stricken parents, his dear, young bride, and his fond grandmother to bow in submission to the inscrutable decrees of Providence.

"The sympathy of millions, which has been so touchingly and visibly expressed, is deeply gratifying at such a time, and I wish, both in my own name and that of my children, to express from my heart, my warm gratitude to *all*.

"These testimonies of sympathy with us, and appreciation of my dear grandson, whom I loved as a son, and whose devotion to me was as great as that of a son, will be a help and consolation to me and mine in our affliction.

My bereavements during the last thirty years of my reign have indeed been heavy. Though the labours, anxieties, and responsibilities inseparable from my position have been great, yet it is my constant prayer that God may continue to give me health and strength to work for the good and happiness of my dear Country and Empire while life lasts."

VICTORIA, R.I.

The whole of the year 1892 was passed very quietly and sadly by the Court, but in 1893 Her Majesty was seen a good deal in public. In March she spent a month at the Villa Palmieri at Florence, and later on held several Drawing Rooms. One of the most important public events of the year was the opening of the Imperial Institute on May 11. Her Majesty had laid the foundation-stone on July 4, 1887, with much state, but the inaugural ceremony was one of the most brilliant spectacles of the present reign. The streets were thronged from Buckingham Palace to South Kensington at an early hour, and the whole of the route was lined with troops.

In 1894 Her Majesty went abroad, and, as before, stayed at Florence for some weeks, when the King and Queen of Italy paid her a visit. The Queen then went on to Coburg, where she was present at the wedding of her grandson, the Grand Duke of Hesse, to her granddaughter, the Princess Victoria Melita of Coburg, on April 19. On her return to England Her Majesty went to Manchester to open the Ship Canal on May 21, and after making a short trip from Irlam to Manchester, declared the Waterway open, and knighted the Lord Mayor of Manchester, the Mayor of Salford, the engineer of the Canal, and some other notabilities. In the year 1895 Her Majesty again went abroad in the spring, but to Nice instead of to Florence, thus beginning that series of visits to the Riviera. On her way home the Queen paid a visit to Darmstadt, where she was visited by the German Emperor and the Empress Frederick. Among the Queen's visitors were Nasrullah Khan, the son of the Ameer of Afghanistan, and the German Emperor, and one of the chief home events of the year was a grand review at Aldershot in July, when the Duke of Connaught led the 20,000 Imperial troops of all arms past the Queen.

Early in 1896 the Queen and her youngest daughter Princess Beatrice suffered another severe loss in the death of Prince Henry of Battenberg, who contracted fever on the West Coast of Africa with the Ashanti Expedition. The body of the Prince was brought home to England on board H.M.S. *Blenheim*, and the funeral took place at Whippingham, where in 1885, he had married the Princess Beatrice. Her Majesty, who was much overcome by the loss of her son-in-law, to whom she had become greatly attached, was present at the funeral service, and in her speech at the opening of Parliament referred to the Prince as her "beloved son-in-law who voluntarily placed his valuable services at the disposal of myself and his adopted country." Early in March the Queen left England for Cannes with Princess Christian and Princess Victoria, and after seven weeks' stay in the Riviera Her Majesty returned to England and went at once to Windsor. A notable visitor in the summer was the Chinese Envoy Li Hung Chang, who was received in audience by the Queen at Osborne, and met with a reception which it is to be feared would hardly be as cordial now, while on June Her Majesty entered upon the sixtieth year of her reign. The day was specially marked at London and Windsor, where the bells were rung, Royal salutes fired, and the public buildings decorated with flags. The Queen's statue, by Mr. Hamo Thornycroft, which was to replace one set up at the commencement of Her Majesty's reign, was also unveiled at the Royal Exchange. On September 23 the Queen had reigned longer than any English Sovereign, her grandfather, George III., having reigned fifty-nine years three months and four days, a limit which Her Majesty surpassed on that day. By the Queen's own desire no special recognition or celebration of the event was attempted, as it was felt that it would be more convenient in every way if the completion of the sixtieth year of reign were made the occasion of a great celebration in June of the following year. By a happy coincidence, the Tsar and Tsaritza of Russia arrived at Balmoral on a visit to the Queen on September 23, and prolonged their stay until October 5. The Tsar and Tsaritza arrived at Leith, where they were received by the Prince of Wales, and from Ballater drove in carriages to Balmoral, where Her Majesty received them surrounded by her retainers bearing torches. The visit was a very quiet one, Lord Salisbury joined the party, but otherwise the visit was strictly private.

With the opening of the year 1897 preparations for celebrating in a fit and proper manner the Queen's long and glorious reign began all over the Empire. The Queen could not, of course, give any commands on the subject of the celebration, but in January the Prince of Wales published a letter, in which he said that, although the Queen would not express any opinion as to the various schemes for popular memorials of her reign, yet he might himself suggest that the Queen would certainly favour works of mercy among the sick and suffering, and anything tending to brighten and ameliorate the lives of her poorer subjects. Acting upon this idea, the Prince of Wales issued an appeal on behalf of the Hospitals of London, pointing out that those institutions are terribly in debt, and asking for a sum which, capitalised, would put the hospitals beyond the reach of want. It is unnecessary now to say that the idea took root at once, and though the amount raised fell short of sanguine anticipations the project has resulted in great benefit to the hospitals.

The actual Diamond Jubilee celebrations took place in June, but in the earlier half of the century the Queen was by no means inactive. The first of January, in particular, was a noteworthy date, inasmuch as on that day some twenty years previously Her Majesty had been proclaimed, by the then Viceroy, Lord Lytton, Empress of India, and throughout the length and breadth of that country, celebrations were held in honour of the event, the tidings thereof being duly retailed to the Queen, who was resting quietly at Osborne. Later in the same month the Empress Frederick, whose precarious state of health helped to sadden the last hours of Her Majesty's life, came for her last annual visit before the Court returned to Windsor in the following month. Towards the end of February Her Majesty came to town to hold a Drawing Room, and in March went abroad for one of those Continental holidays from which in the last years of her life Her Majesty always seemed to derive so much benefit, and the sacrifice of which in the year before her death, so as to be near her people in time of trouble, unquestionably told on her much-tried constitution. From the beginning of March until the end of April Her Majesty stayed at Cimiez, stopping on her way to have a brief interview with President Faure. On the 3rd of May a Privy Council was held, at which the new United States Ambassador, Colonel Hay, presented his credentials, while at the Drawing Room during the same month Her Majesty received a splendid reception as she drove through the streets. In the spring and summer of 1897, indeed, the country, always loyal, seemed to be swept by a wave of new, and if possible increased, affection for the venerated sovereign, who during that time was perhaps more in evidence than she had been for many years, and her visit to Sheffield to open the Town Hall gave unbounded satisfaction. Then for a month Her Majesty rested quietly at Windsor, while all London was in a ferment and fever of excitement over the Jubilee celebrations. Every available space along the route of the procession was turned into a grand stand. Fabulous prices were asked and given for coigns of vantage, and there was not one of the Queen's subjects who did not desire and strive to be present and do her honour on this the greatest day of her reign. On the Saturday before the great day Her Majesty witnessed a grand military tattoo in the Quadrangle at Windsor Castle. On the Sunday, which was Ascension Day, a special service was held in St. George's Chapel, at which the Queen, the Empress Frederick and a distinguished family gathering were present. On the Monday, in an entirely new Royal train, Her Majesty travelled to Paddington, and after receiving an address from the Paddington Vestry, entered London in semi-state, the streets being thronged with people, and the progress of Her Majesty's carriage being marked by such an enthusiastic greeting from those who filled the streets as can have fallen to few sovereigns to

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meet with or merit. The proverbial Queen's weather favoured the day of days, although the morning was at first a trifle overcast. Early in the morning the streets were crowded, the enthusiasm of some people even prompting them to spend the previous night in the streets, while some fifty thousand troops kept the line of route. The first part of the procession was that which attracted the most attention. The Diamond Jubilee differed from the Jubilee of ten years before, in that the Queen did not drive through London attended by the sovereigns of friendly if rival powers. It was pre-eminently a family gathering, in which all Her Majesty's immediate descendants figured, while ahead rode representatives of a score and more of nationalities from every quarter of the globe—typifying the vast Empire which had grown under her wise and kindly rule—one and all only too proud to acknowledge her as their Sovereign Ruler. This splendid Colonial procession, which rode ahead as far as St. Paul's, was preceded by a party of the Blues, followed by Lord Roberts. There were strange men from every quarter of the globe, all bound together by a common tie—that of loyalty and affection for the great lady whom one and all, sightseers and processionists, were gathered together to honour. In the sixty splendid years of her reign the Empire had waxed great, and flourished, and to maintain Her Majesty's dominions these stirdy Colonials were ready to lay down their lives, as many and many a gallant soul has since proved. Last in the procession, long looked for, and greeted with a warmth that left no doubt as to the joy and enthusiasm of the crowd came the Queen, riding with the Princess of Wales, the Prince Christian facing her; while Lord Wolseley rode ahead, and the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, and the Duke of Cambridge rode alongside. None who witnessed that scene will ever let it fade from their memory, or will forget the little thrill of emotion which came to them when they saw the venerable lady, to honour whom was everyone's thought, and as a tribute to whom men and women gathered from all quarters of the Empire. In her simple dignity she stood out as the mother of nations, typical of all the best qualities of womanhood. At Temple Bar the Lord Mayor, in accordance with ancient custom, presented Her Majesty with the Civic Sword, which the Queen touched, then commanding the Mayor to lead the way into the City. At St. Paul's the scene was remarkable. A space was clear in front of the Cathedral, while in the centre of the steps leading to the west door stood Dr. Temple, Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Creighton, the late Bishop of London (the sending of a sympathetic message to whose widow was one of the last kindly acts performed by the Queen), the Dean of St. Paul's, the Bishop of Winchester, etc. Grouped behind and around were the choristers and bands. Her Majesty's carriage came to a standstill before the steps, and a very brief service followed, at the end of which the whole vast crowd broke out spontaneously into the National Anthem, while subsequently three cheers for the Queen were given with the utmost enthusiasm. It only remained for the chief prelates to do homage, and then the procession started on its homeward way, halting just for a brief space at the Mansion House, where the Lady Mayoress presented a silver basket of orchids. Three hours after the time of starting Her Majesty returned to Buckingham Palace, tired but profoundly moved by the genuine feeling and affection which underlay all the demonstrations, and replies were even then beginning to pour in to the simple, heartfelt message which she had despatched before starting, "and which ran: "From my heart I thank my beloved people. May God bless you.—Victoria R. v.e I."

This is not the place to refer to the illuminations and decorations which were so great a feature, or to the crowds which in vast orderly processions paraded the streets half the night, but none are likely to forget the aspect of London at that time. The Queen's next acts were to receive first the Lords and then the Commons at Buckingham Palace, then the Chairmen of the County Council, the Mayors and Provosts of the Kingdom, and subsequently to inspect the Yeomen of the Guard, while the review of ten thousand school children on Constitution Hill, on the way to Windsor, was another kindly action, for to everyone of those children it is safe to say the ceremony is now an event of cherished memory. Addresses and presents innumerable came, not only from every part of the kingdom but of the world, and though the Queen was not present at the great Naval Review at Spithead—the greatest naval review which the world has seen—Her Majesty returned to town to give a State Garden Party at Buckingham Palace, when everyone remarked on Her Majesty's robust appearance, which augured many more years of happy life. On July 1, 28,000 picked soldiers were reviewed at Aldershot, while the Colonial and Indian troops were inspected afterwards at Windsor.

It was early in the following year—1898—after spending Christmas at Osborne, that evidence was given in more than one direction of that kindly thought for others which was always one of Her Majesty's strongest characteristics. Orders were given that Kensington Palace should be thrown open to the public, whereby everyone can now go and wander round the place of which so much mention is made earlier in these pages—a place which everyone knows is crowded with memories of Her Majesty's childhood. Again, soldiers from Benin were reviewed and made happy by meeting their Sovereign, while in February Her Majesty paid one of those visits to Netley Hospital, which were always a source of infinite gratification to the men who had fallen out in her service. The spring was again spent at Cimiez, Her Majesty returning to hold the usual Drawing Room and again to visit Netley, both visits being to carry comfort and consolation to the wounded men from the Tirah campaign. Her Majesty was well enough then to rise from her chair to pin the Victoria Cross to the breasts of Private Vickery and the famous Piper Findlater. The rest of the year was spent comparatively quietly at Balmoral, Windsor, and Osborne, reviews, presentations of colours, and a private investiture of the Order of the Bath, Star of India, St. Michael and St. George, and of the Indian Empire being perhaps the chief events. It should be mentioned, though, that a third visit was paid to Netley, this time Her Majesty being received by the then Sirdar (Lord Kitchener), when many wounded soldiers from Omdurman were personally decorated with the Soudan medal, while two visits were paid to the Prince of Wales on the Royal yacht "Osborne," who, it will be remembered, was an invalid for some time by reason of a slight accident to his knee. The following year opened quietly enough, however darkly it went out. Her Majesty went for her usual spring holiday to Nice, travelling via Folkestone and Boulogne, the "Calais-Douvres" in which she sailed being accompanied by two lines of torpedo destroyers, with whose appearance Her Majesty was much pleased. It is worthy of notice in this connection that the previous time on which the Queen had landed at Boulogne was in August, 1855, in company with the Prince Consort, the Prince of Wales, and Princess Alice, on which occasion she was received by the Emperor Napoleon III. On Her Majesty's return she visited Kensington Palace, and carefully inspected the home of her childhood preparatory to its being thrown open to the public on Her Majesty's birthday as Her Majesty's Diamond Jubilee gift to the nation, while another notable function in the same month (May) was the laying of the foundation stone of the Victoria and Albert Museum at Kensington. Throughout the year negotiations had been proceeding, more or less unsatisfactorily, with the Transvaal, it having become necessary that steps should be taken to secure better treatment for those of Her Majesty's subjects who were resident in that country. From the first, however, it is now evident that President Kruger was merely playing a procrastinating game in order to gain time and declare war at the moment when it pleased him, and when there seemed more prospect of his being able effectively to carry out his threat and sweep the English into the sea. Everyone wished that, even though war might be necessary at last, the closing years of the Queen's reign might be spared the anxiety and misery of a bitter and protracted war, and every effort was made to bring matters to a peaceful issue. But it was not to be, for on October 10th an impudent ultimatum was received, which left the Government no alternative but to resort to the last arbitrament of arms. Failing resolute action, no sane person doubts that South Africa would have been lost to this country, and the Empire been shorn, not merely of one of its richest possessions, but of a necessary half-way house on the highway to India. One can well believe that Her Majesty saw the way in which events were tending with sadness. She had had her full share of sorrow, and any war must affect her personally as much as the poorest citizen, for many,

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ladies," were the friends and relations whose lives were thus placed in jeopardy; but never did Her Majesty allow personal considerations to swerve her from that path which led towards the nation's highest interests. With confidence and courage she set herself to encourage, not merely those who were going forth to fight the country's battles, but the women who were left to serve their country in that hardest of all ways, by standing and waiting—waiting in misery and suspense for the return of loved ones. A true woman herself, it would be hard to over-estimate the work she did in this direction, and the spontaneous burst of loyalty and affection which broke out in the rejoicings of the Jubilee year deepened and intensified in the years of trial which followed as one and all realised how keenly and how tragically recent events touched the throne, and established a common bond of sympathy. To the Gordon Highlanders at Balmoral and to the Household troops at Windsor Her Majesty made good-bye in words which showed only too plainly what she was feeling, for though great and low may suffer alike, the greater the position the greater the possibilities of pain, and after the departure of the Life Guards—full of eagerness, enthusiasm, and high spirits—it was very characteristic of the Queen that, cheerful though her words of farewell may have been, she very speedily visited the Victoria Barracks at Windsor and gave her womanly sympathy to the wives who knew, with her, and only too well, an aspect of war quite other than that which lends its glamour to bold spirits eager for action.

That year (1899), for the first time for thirteen years, the Queen spent Christmas at Windsor, on Boxing Day entertaining at tea in St. George's Hall wives and families of soldiers at the front. Throughout this trying time, indeed, no one could have been more happily inspired than the Sovereign, of whom it has often been said that she was beyond measure the cleverest stateswoman—or stateswoman, shall it be said—in the country. And not the least of the thoughtful and happily inspired actions which Her Majesty did at this period was to send to each of the soldiers in South Africa a New Year's present of chocolate as a "personal gift." No gift could have been more welcome. It was gracious and timely. In some homes the little tins, with the portrait of the Queen on the lid, are likely to be cherished for many a long day. Some were sold for considerable sums, it is true; but in nearly every case this was a sacrifice made by the recipient to raise funds for a comrade's widow or children, others the writer has seen elaborately framed, showing the value in which they were held, while the chocolate itself was a real benefit to many a man on short rations, for its value as food is now well known, and the day has gone by when one could laugh at a "chocolate soldier." Despite a very welcome visit to Windsor from the German Emperor and Empress, the year ended darkly enough, and the series of reverses which depressed the country cannot but have told on the Queen, though her cheering messages in the following January never revealed it. "I watch with admiration your determined and gallant defence," the message sent to Kimberley, was typical of many which showed a keen appreciation of the sacrifices her soldiers were making. While at Windsor Her Majesty paid another visit to Netley this time to see the sick and wounded from South Africa, in whose welfare she always took the deepest interest. But it may be questioned whether anything ever in this connection caused more general satisfaction than the announcement made in March last year, when the tide of war began to unmistakably turn in our favour, and the news of the relief of Ladysmith had cheered everyone, that to mark her appreciation of the outburst of loyalty brought forth by the war Her Majesty would come to town to spend a few days, and to show herself by driving through the streets. In the same spirit the Queen decided to abandon the projected spring visit to Bordighera, and to stay among her own people in her own country. No announcement could have been more timely or created better feeling, but in the last year of her life the Queen did many things to show how real was the bond of sympathy between her and her people. The visit to London was in every way a success, and caused unbounded satisfaction. When the Royal train steamed into Paddington, London was ready. From Paddington to the Victoria Gate, from the Victoria Gate through the Park, from Hyde Park Corner to Buckingham Palace, the line of the Queen's subjects—her subjects and her protectors—was unbroken. Through this avenue of her people the Queen drove in an open carriage, with no other escort than a dozen Life Guards and a few mounted police, and one wonders whether any other monarch could have done the same. With the Queen's carriage ran a never-ending cheer. When it reached a great open space the cheer changed its treble note—the note of women's and children's voices—for the fuller, deeper note of men's cheers, and the roar of applause suddenly changed once more to the stirring notes of the National Anthem. This happened at Hyde Park Corner and again at Buckingham Palace, where a dense crowd waited outside, and where the Peers and Commons waited bare-headed inside the gates.

In the afternoon the Queen, still retaining her small but picturesque escort of Life Guards, drove with Princess Beatrice and Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein to the City. In its outward aspect the visit was marked by the same simplicity that characterised every incident of the Queen's visit. Only afterwards was it proved, by the honours which Her Majesty conferred upon the Lord Mayor and the Sheriffs, that she intended by it to convey a graceful recognition of the strenuous and liberal efforts which the City has made towards bearing the burden of the war by raising the famous City Imperial Volunteers. The crowds which had not been able to welcome the Queen in the morning—and many of those that had—turned out to greet her in the afternoon.

Equally happily inspired was an order circulated by the Queen's command at this time, a forerunner of another event of unusual and singular interest. The services of Irish troops and Irish generals in the war were such as the Queen was not willing to let go unrecognised. An order was therefore promulgated by which Irish regiments should be allowed to wear the shamrock on St. Patrick's Day, and St. Patrick's Day (March 17th) was accordingly celebrated, not in Ireland alone, but in London and in Bloemfontein, in a most remarkable manner. The Queen herself wore all day a sprig of shamrock sent by a loyal Irishwoman, and the Wearing of the Green sprang at once into the dignity almost of a Royal decoration. The event of which this proclamation was the forerunner was that the Queen, who it was known had foregone her usual Continental holiday, would spend April among her subjects in Ireland. It was a timely proposal, and though some few professional malcontents were not wholly pleased, the announcement gave great satisfaction, and the natural warmth of heart of the Irish people was sufficient to cause the prospect to be welcomed with an enthusiasm only second to that which greeted the Queen herself. The journey to Ireland was made on the 2nd—3rd of April, and on the next day the Queen entered the historic gates of Dublin to the sounds and sights of a welcome which must have reminded her of that with which London had received her. The beginning of this visit, half a century after the last visit to Irish soil, was signalised by a proclamation for the formation of a new regiment of "Irish Guards"; its end was marked by a queenly gift to the poor of Dublin and by the expression, in a message to the Irish people, of the way in which the Queen had been gratified and touched by the reception they had given her. During the month Drawing Rooms and balls were given at the Castle; a great review of troops was held in Phœnix Park, and a less martial one of school children; the Royal Hospital at Kilmainham and the fleet in the Irish Sea were inspected; addresses were received from public bodies; and honours conferred upon the Lord Mayors of Dublin and Belfast. If these were the great events of the year there were a hundred other kindly acts which testified to the Queen's recognition and sympathy. The fire in Ottawa and the Indian famine received generous aid; Captain Lambton and his gallant Naval Brigade were seen and reviewed; while the homecoming of the C.I.V. and the arrival in England of the gallant Canadians were each marked by some token of sympathy, regard, or appreciation. Though sorely tried in many ways, Her Majesty was always ready to pin the V.C. on the breast of a brave man, or to receive at Windsor those who had served her, from the Irish nurses at Mafeking to the Canadians who fought at Paardeberg, and was ever more than glad to welcome back these who fought for her.

That this year was a sad one in many ways can easily be believed. The war, which at one time seemed to promise a speedy termination, lingered on remorselessly, and deprived the Queen of one near kinsman—namely, her grandson, Prince Christian Victor, who, attacked by fever while engaged on Lord Roberts' staff at Pretoria, ended a

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life full of promise. The illness of the Empress Frederick was another great anxiety, the death of Her Majesty's second son, in July, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, also came as a great shock, while still more recently a great personal friend, the Dowager Lady Churchill, died very suddenly. Nevertheless, until the beginning of this year the Queen never lost her grip of affairs or her interest and sympathy in those around her. At Balmoral, Windsor, and Osborne she received and entertained Princes, statesmen, and soldiers. Ninety Colonials, invalided home, were received and greeted warmly at Windsor, the 2nd Canadian Regiment was also inspected on its return from the front, while only a week or two before her death the Queen was welcoming Lord Roberts, and bestowing on him personally well-deserved honours—even as little more than a year before Her Majesty had spoken words of sympathy to Lady Roberts, when giving her the valued of all decoration which her gallant son had not lived to receive. There is little doubt, however, that Her Majesty's health was not improved by the lack of her usual holidays abroad, Cowes during the last winter was not as beneficial as Cannes; and the visit to Dublin instead of France, last Easter, was an act of generous self-sacrifice.

The first authoritative information relative to Her Majesty's ill-health came in the "Court Circular" of January 18th, when announcement was made that the Queen had not lately been in her usual health, and was unable for the present to take her customary drives. Events during the past year, it was said, had had a great strain upon her powers, and this had rather told upon Her Majesty's nervous system. It was therefore thought advisable by Her Majesty's physicians that the Queen should be kept perfectly quiet in the house, and should abstain for the present from transacting business. On the 15th Her Majesty had taken her usual drive in the grounds of Osborne House, and until the end of that week it was hoped that a change to the more invigorating climate of the Riviera would bring about at least a temporary recovery; but the growing gravity of the situation rendered this impossible, and on the following Monday a series of gloomy bulletins aroused the worst anticipations. On the Saturday the Royal Family had been summoned, the Prince and Princess of Wales being the first to arrive. On Sunday the German Emperor, travelling with the Duke of Connaught, came to London in haste. The Emperor was not in town by the Prince of Wales, and going to Osborne on Monday remained there until the end. Countless messages of sympathy poured in from every quarter, while the hope was entertained to the last that the Queen's strong constitution would enable her to rally; but although there was once a slight temporary improvement, Her Majesty passed away on Tuesday evening, at half-past six, the sad event being announced by a telegram from the Prince of Wales to the Lord Mayor, which ran as follows:—"My beloved mother, the Queen, has just passed away, surrounded by her children and grandchildren." One cannot here deal with the extraordinary emotion aroused by the death of the Queen, who throughout her long life exercised such a glorious influence and endeared herself so passionately to her people. But the love which she gave to them they returned in, if possible, greater measure, and while everyone knows that throughout Victoria's reign the country and Empire have made colossal advance, few realise how much this progress has been due to the beneficent rule of England's noblest Queen.

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